

## IV

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### Radical Visions

German-American radicalism was a varied and complex set of people, newspapers, and political and cultural institutions. The editors had diverse backgrounds, coming from all over Germany and going to most corners of the United States. They were Catholic, Lutheran, and freethinker, and came in waves after 1848 and 1871, jostling the earlier immigrants with new ideas as they were jolted by what they saw in their new home. In the second half of the nineteenth century, German-American radicalism developed from its roots in the tradition that the 48ers brought with them and confronted a working-class trade unionism that grew apace after the Civil War. These editors and their newspapers spoke with different voices that were shaped by their immigrant roots and by their American circumstances, by the date of their migration and the place they chose to settle, by the state of American industrial capitalism and the strength of the American political and civic institutions pitted against them.

It is in the lives of these editors that the most striking difference between German-American radicalism and German socialism is evident. Freed from the constraints of party discipline, the absolutist state, and the strong presence of established religions, German-American radicals developed in ways that would have been unthinkable in Bismarck's Reich. To be sure, there was the Socialist Labor party, which copied the old-world Marxist political forms, demanding strict discipline and hewing to a line that was based in abstract theory. But it remained an isolated phenomenon, only to have important influence when it tried to cooperate with the broader-based left. One could not imagine a figure such as Robert Reitzel, a man whose



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broad sympathies and wide intellectual range moved him across the radical spectrum, flourishing in Bismarckian Germany. Ludwig Lore, balancing a feeling for a theoretical Marxist line with a more sensitive reading of American political culture, tried, and ultimately failed, to develop a communism that would meet the demands of the aging generation of radical German-Americans in the 1920s and 1930s. Josef Jodlbauer, the Austrian parliamentary deputy who came in the 1910s and left in the 1920s, ran up against the flip side of American pluralism. Though a myriad of radical groups and papers existed, and the radical critique was strong and pointed, the ability of American political culture to absorb shocks and to defeat radicalism by a mixture of repression and inattention ended his quest in disillusion and reverse migration. But what comes through most strongly in the divergent radical visions presented here is the call for a more just society, a call that still strikes chords that echo throughout American history.



## Robert Reitzel, *Der Arme Teufel*

What does such an Arme Teufel have to do? O, worthy readers, so much, so endlessly much! He must clutch to his heart all of the grandeur and beauty which all of Nature and all of the works of mankind have to offer . . . he must relive all of world history. . . . The Arme Teufel endures it laughingly when someone rates him at the highest level, as every roguish fool tries to take him in with praise . . . but his heart grows angry when he must see how unashamed ignorance struts in the robes of wisdom, how parasitic evil sucks the vitality from the veins of innocence which bears it, how mankind cheers for lies which appear unadorned, and how the truth has been masked so long that mankind can no longer distinguish between truth and lies. But if an Arme Teufel's heart sometimes grows angry, what does he have to fear? His Fatherland is the world; his religion is do what seems right and hesitate before no one, not even the God-bogeyman tailored especially for big children; his party will never demand a share of booty; his income cannot be cut.

Robert Reitzel, "Unser Programm," *Der arme Teufel*, Dec. 6, 1884.

Poet, literary critic, essayist, journalist, and radical propagandist, Robert Reitzel was perhaps the most lively and imaginative, certainly the most irreverent, literary voice of nineteenth-century American Germania. As his eight-page Detroit weekly, *Der arme Teufel*, expanded its readership from a regional base to an international audience, Reitzel became the most eloquent exponent of a brand of German radicalism bridging the generational gap between the liberal Enlightenment rationalism and literary romanticism of disappointed 48ers and the revolutionary proletarianism of the late-nineteenth-century immigrant



left. To contemporary radicals who rediscover him he is an appealing figure, anticipating the political concerns, moral tone, and style of the New Left far more than most of the socialist intellectuals who followed him.<sup>1</sup> His career also illustrates poignantly a contemporary dilemma—the bittersweet anguish of those who unswervingly maintain a radical faith in a nonradical era.

By the late nineteenth century, in both American Germania and Germany, Marxist socialism had become so hegemonic that it was virtually synonymous with the German left. To be sure, socialists vigorously debated strategy and tactics. Yet German-American counterparts of Kautsky, Bernstein, or Luxemburg all saw themselves as part of the Marxist tradition. Indeed, the flourishing of that tradition in their homeland served as powerful emotional compensation for their relative lack of success in America. But a generation earlier, the intellectual spectrum of the German-American (and German) left had been broader. The 48ers and their successors from the 1850s to the 1880s had included Paineite radical democrats, Freidenker, anarchists, utopians, Lassalleans, as well as Marxists. While followers of all these tendencies endorsed the emerging labor movement, many of them were not workers but intellectuals, professionals, shopkeepers, occasionally even owners of substantial businesses. For such shopkeepers or professionals the emotional wellsprings of their radicalism had more to do with anticlericalism, rationalism, or radical egalitarianism than class struggle at the point of production.<sup>2</sup> Although Reitzel actively sympathized with workers' struggles, and he gave the funeral oration over the graves of the Haymarket martyrs in 1887, his *Der arme Teufel* depended on radical shopkeepers and nonconformist intellectuals more than on radical artisans or trade union activists. His story suggests that scholars who want to understand the German-American radicalism of his generation will have to look to the Turnvereine and Free Thought clubs of German-American communities as much as to their union halls.

Reitzel was born in the village of Schopfheim in Baden in January 1849. His mother and her brother had been closely linked to the revolutionaries Friedrich Hecker and Georg Herwegh; his mother named him after Robert Blum, a Leipzig revolutionary orator who had just been killed in Vienna. However, his father, a local schoolmaster afraid for his position, wanted nothing to do with his wife's radical associates. Indeed, on the night Reitzel was born, his uncle, with the police on his heels, had sought refuge in the Reitzel household, and his father had tried to turn him away from the door.<sup>3</sup>

Not surprisingly, his family life was unhappy. His mother and father



quarreled. His father, whom Reitzel described as authoritarian and puritanical, beat him regularly. His mother tried to shield him, to instill in him her radical faith, and to support his literary interests, but she died of consumption when he was sixteen. Expelled from the gymnasium in nearby Mannheim, he nonetheless gained admission to the University of Heidelberg. Officially he majored in theology and philosophy because divinity students from poor families received a stipend, but he studied little theology, devoting himself far more to "love, wine, revolution, and freedom."<sup>4</sup> In 1870, with the university degree still far from completion, his exasperated father issued an ultimatum: join the army or go to America. Reitzel's older brother had fled to America the year before. The choice was clear—America!

With a bit of nostalgia for his homeland, but also the enthusiasm of an adventurous vagabond, he boarded a ship bound for America. He had little in common with the upstanding German burghers among his fellow passengers, but amused himself by composing ribald rhymes with another young student, the future pastor of an "enlightened" St. Louis congregation and eventually one of his loyal subscribers. One sample is included in his biographical essay, "Abenteuer eines Grünen":

I love because love I must,  
I love on orders from above,  
And when I cannot love anyone,  
Dammit! then I start on getting drunk.<sup>5</sup>

As he landed in New York harbor, "even in a free country," he discovered "to my horror . . . a customs inspection existed. The suitcase had to be opened." Unfortunately, his ancient trunk no longer had any clasps, and he had laboriously tied it shut. Once he had ripped it open for the customs clerk to rifle through, he could no longer close it. His fellow passengers rushed about him to catch the ferry to Castle Garden. No one would help the bedraggled student dragging the trunk with its contents spilling out. "I already had a foretaste of what awaited me in America" (p. 44).

"To return to my theological career, even if I had passed my state certification exam, did not appeal to me." He made the rounds of the German newspaper offices, publishers, and book dealers with no success. As his meager funds disappeared, "my pride and ambition sank ever closer to zero." A German brickmaker who had advertised for help would not take him, but referred him to the proprietor of a small German restaurant. Frau Pfaff looked suspiciously at his glasses, but decided to take a chance. He could start as an apprentice waiter. He made three dollars in the five days he lasted (pp. 45–48).



Expelled from his boardinghouse, still unemployed, he slept on stoops or in the backs of bakery and butcher wagons parked on the streets. Finally, along with other unemployed young German and Irish immigrants he joined a railroad track crew bound for upstate New York. Wielding a pickaxe, "there I learned respect for work . . . the higher the sun rose, the more tired and unwilling my arms became . . . by evening my hands were covered with blisters. . . . How little do we reflect, when we are pulled by a locomotive, traveling smoothly and comfortably through the world, how many thousands of hands had to work like slaves for us to ride over this new door to heaven" (p. 57).

Reitzel and four other young Germans decided that laying tracks was not the life for them. Together they set off on the tramp, through New York and Pennsylvania, working odd jobs along the way. Unemployed once again in central Pennsylvania, Reitzel and his comrades debated their next destination. He remembered one of his sarcastic student songs about a minister from Freiburg, Carl Pistorius, "Pistor," who escaped Death by shipping him off "to Baltimore" (p. 68). Why not Baltimore?

By Baltimore, Reitzel found himself alone, penniless, hungry, and forlorn. As he passed a church, the words on a small sign caught his attention: "Rev. Pister, the pastor of this congregation lives at . . ." With a dose of "gallows humor once again in my breast," he banged on Rev. Pister's door. The good minister turned out to be a kindly man who took the bedraggled ex-divinity student under his wing, fed him, cleaned him up, and decided to groom him for the ministry (pp. 79-80).

A few weeks later he gave his first sermon to Rev. Pister's congregation. It was, as he recalled years later, a harrowing experience: "The first sermon!—The first duel, the first fight, the first explanation of love, the first hangover—all child's play compared to the first sermon. I had certainly already taken history exams, directed many toasts, and sung many songs, but to stand on a pulpit, in a black robe with long overhanging sleeves, the center of attention of all the wise-looking, dumbly gaping, mischievous, and pious eyes, and there to preach the Word of God—I do not wish on my worst enemy the dreams I endured the nights preceding this sermon" (p. 99).

A bit more coaching and advice from Rev. Pister ("above all . . . keep it short!") and he passed his certification examination before three ministers representing the German Reformed Church synod. He was assigned to a congregation in nearby Washington with an annual salary of six hundred dollars—more money than he had ever earned before or would thereafter. Beyond enjoying his newfound fortune,



Reitzel had notions of using his clerical authority to propagate humanistic ethics. His sermons, anticipating his later literary interests, drew far more on German literature, on the beauty of nature, and on the ideal of freedom than on theology, of which he knew little and cared less (pp. 99, 117–21, 126).

At first many of his parishioners proved to be surprisingly tolerant and flexible. Perhaps there was a sprinkling of 48ers amongst them who found the new pastor's philosophy to their liking. When descriptions of some of his preachings reached church authorities, the congregation agreed to leave the Reformed Church and become an independent congregation rather than expel their unorthodox minister as the synod demanded. But Reitzel was drifting farther and farther from any compromises with respectability. He had begun to spend much of his spare time with the Washington Freie Gemeinde, the local club of organized freethinkers. He appeared on his pulpit Sunday mornings obviously suffering from the aftereffects of Saturday-night revels. A delegation of parishioners suggested "The people are complaining . . . it is after all a church. . . . we truly have nothing to take exception with . . . but our wives are very dissatisfied that you appear on the pulpit without your cassock. . . . You must know, Herr Pastor, that a minister is still always a minister. . . . if you could just show just a little more discretion" (p. 144).

Discretion was never Reitzel's strong suit. "There is nothing worse for progressive aspirations," he would write twenty years later, "than halfway measures, there is nothing more disgraceful for a true free-thinker than compromise." In 1874 he quit his ministerial career rather than adjust to his parishioners' requests.<sup>6</sup>

Over the next ten years he supported himself as a lecturer and writer for the German-American free-thought movement, traveling widely and developing a reputation as a brilliant speaker and writer. In 1884 local admirers in Detroit invited him to settle there, offering financial support for a weekly journal. The first issue of *Der arme Teufel* appeared on December 6, 1884.

He quickly established himself as one of the intellectual leaders of Detroit's radical Germania, the featured speaker at such German community events as the annual Paine festival sponsored by the local Turnverein or the annual commemoration of the Paris Commune. Radical Germans in Detroit had a highly organized subculture within the local German community including German unions and a German city labor federation (the Central Labor Union), an active local of the largely German Socialist Labor party, a German labor press, and a variety of cultural institutions including singing societies, the Turn-



verein, and private schools run by freethinkers. German union leaders, socialists, and radical intellectuals had a ready audience among the city's large, mainly working-class, German population. German immigrants and their children, who often still lived in ethnic neighborhoods, made up 27 percent of Detroit's population in 1890. In 1880, 86 percent of the German-born were employed in working-class occupations; in 1900, 83 percent. The German neighborhoods of Detroit's East Side were the city's most enthusiastic base of support for craft unions, boycott and shorter hours movements, radical plays and left-wing lectures, and the local Independent Labor party, which elected several of Detroit's state legislators in the mid-1880s.<sup>7</sup>

Although certainly an enthusiastic supporter of radical political movements, at first Reitzel devoted most of his columns to literary criticism and free-thought diatribes. He mocked the bourgeois celebrants of German literary Kultur who lionized Goethe and Schiller as German national heroes without actually reading a line that they had written. If the self-appointed conservative spokesmen of German-American ethnic identity actually read Goethe and Schiller, Reitzel observed, such worthies would probably advocate book-burning. He carried on an editorial joust with Herr Muller, the editor of the local German Catholic *Die Stimme der Wahrheit*. Muller, outraged over Reitzel's sacrilegious sarcasm, attacked the "freethinker garbage" of the "god blasphemer Reitzel" almost every week. In a regular column entitled "Stimmemuller," Reitzel gleefully repeated Muller's weekly charges or woefully chided Muller for forgetting him when no anti-Reitzel material had appeared. "Is it possible that I have insulted friend Muller?"<sup>8</sup>

When some of the local socialist stalwarts criticized Reitzel for not paying enough attention to political economy, he lambasted his comrades for lack of imagination. In a critique of the first issue of *Der Socialist*, the new central organ of the SLP, he argued that socialists were only preaching to the converted. Socialist newspapers were boring, with virtually every article nothing more than a repetition of the party program in various forms. He attended most of the frequent speeches of prominent socialist lecturers, but he found their orations, for the most part, long-winded. The anarchists, who at least spoke with more feeling, were more to Reitzel's taste. When Michael Schwab, soon to be one of the Haymarket defendants, spoke in Detroit in the spring of 1886, Reitzel noted that he spoke "simply, but with warmth." And he "stuck to the point" and did not use the talk as another opportunity to argue about "the unpleasant house-fight between anarchists and socialists." Schwab also talked too long. "In the workers' movement



people still have the idea that a speech is not a speech if it isn't at least two hours long."<sup>9</sup>

While he scorned Marxist orthodoxy and the cult of the proletariat, Reitzel's loyalties were nonetheless unequivocal. "The world belongs to all. That sounds nice in theory, only unfortunately it is quite different in practice." There was no way to change that except through struggle. The socialists lacked a sense of the long history of human inequality. Socialists who ridiculed plays and literature as "Spielerei" did not appreciate the role of liberal values in changing human culture. Yet he seemed torn, perhaps doubting his own assertions about the significance of cultural activity. The same editorial which began with a plea for a sense of history and cultural change ended with a celebration of the invention of dynamite which would "guarantee the final victory of the weak and unarmed, . . . just as the cannon had allowed the peasants and townspeople to attack the knight's castle . . . against illegitimate authority . . . every weapon is justified."<sup>10</sup>

The events of the spring of 1886—the rise of the Knights of Labor, the national eight-hour-day strike, the Haymarket bombing, and especially the subsequent arrest and sentencing of the eight Chicago anarchists accused of inciting the unknown bomb thrower—pushed Reitzel toward a more activist resolution of this tension between philosophical ideals and praxis. Reitzel recognized far more quickly than most of his contemporaries that the trial of eight anarchist leaders and the death sentences of seven of them were an effort by the "moneybags" to "crush or at the very least to turn back the labor movement for a decade." Perhaps he was speaking to his own inner voice, as much as to the audience of 1,700 Detroit supporters of the accused men, when he told them one month before the executions, "There is a time when writing is enough, there is a time when one must strike hearts with the spoken word, there is a time when weapons mean more than pen or word. We now stand in the midst of the second time, the third is at the door."<sup>11</sup>

From the start Reitzel almost instinctively grasped the historical significance of what came to be known as the Haymarket Affair. He was shocked and astounded when most of his journalistic compatriots reacted differently, not only in the mainstream press but also, with only a few exceptions,<sup>12</sup> most of the editors of the English-language labor and of German-language liberal and free-thought newspapers:

If pitiful whining and servile, brutal rage was ever the order of the day in this republic, it is so right now after the streetbattling of the Old World



has first made an appearance in one of our big cities. . . . But that after the inevitable defeat of the first outposts of struggle such a choir of a hundred thousand fools would be shot up out of the old swamp, I would not have imagined. . . .

Every stump speaker who painfully awaits an electoral campaign in order to win himself a new robe of office, every statesman who has swindled himself an office, every porter for whom a grocery store beckons as reward for faithful service, every newspaper writer—has become like Luther, who pledged freedom to the last drop of his blood, when he meant the freedom of the powerful, but became the pitiless hangman's preacher when dealing with justice for farmers and proletarians.<sup>13</sup>

Reitzel traveled to Chicago to report on the trial for his readers. He had already met several of the defendants on their earlier speaking tours through Detroit and had been impressed then with their warmth and feeling. They had written him from Cook County jail, thanking him for standing by them when so many others, even on the left, sought safety in silence or joined the chorus of denunciation, hoping to preserve their own legitimacy from the taint of anarchism. At the trial, the contrast between the quiet dignity of the defendants and the ferocity of their judicial antagonists deepened his affection for the men and his respect for their integrity. These men were not criminals! They were *Arme Teufels* who refused to confess any sins to their hypocritical oppressors, refused to beg for clemency. They would die rather than renounce their ideals. "Do with me what you please, your honor," Oscar Neebe, the only one of the eight defendants not sentenced to death, told the judge. "Hang me with my comrades." Louis Lingg told Reitzel, "my young Landsmann," that "in our situation, there is nothing more contemptible than the principle of self-preservation."<sup>14</sup>

Over the next year, as Reitzel became more and more engrossed in the defense of the convicted men, his tone changed from sarcasm and defiance to fear, desperation, and, as he finally came to see clearly that five of the men were indeed doomed, bitter anger and sadness. First, after the trial, defiance: "Hang them, hang them if you dare! You have the power and the might and the glory, but—not forever. Amen." After the Illinois State Supreme Court upheld the verdict in September 1887, deepening fear: "The second throw in the horrible game of dice for the lives of the seven men has come up snake eyes and it means death. . . . The execution is scheduled for November 11 between 9 in the morning and 2 in the afternoon."<sup>15</sup>

"We must protest," with growing desperation he implored the audience of the Detroit protest meeting just twenty-six days before the executions, "from one end of this country to the other. . . . A free word



at the right time is a free deed. . . . Now is the time for the voice of the people to tip the balance of the scales. Man! it is your brother, Woman! it is your son, who will be murdered there. Humanity! they want to dishonor and annihilate your greatest goodness on those gallows. If today you cannot hate, if today your hearts cannot be roused to indignation, then it will be to your infamy if you ever again dare to complain of any injustice committed against you."<sup>16</sup>

Time was running out. "The day of revenge draws near, the revenge of the moneyed rabble against the workers. . . . Sensitive hearts who could not believe in the total vulgarity of the ruling class awaited the tiniest glimmer of justice from the Supreme Court of the United States." However, the Supreme Court, on November 2, 1887, nine days before the scheduled executions, refused to overturn the verdict.

The pessimists inside and outside of the Chicago Bastille were once again correct. . . . The shame of letting seven men who belong to us, who have dedicated their lives to the people, be butchered in our midst without our raising a hand—?! Can that be? Must it be?

To be sure, the Parisians once stormed the Bastille with a pair of ordinary pickaxes. But that was long ago; and the Chicagoans are no Parisians, and if a Camille Desmoulins exists today, he howls for a booty-party in an election meeting, and in September the trees no longer have any green leaves.

And yet I still have hope that this *dies irae* can still come to be a *dies illa*<sup>17</sup> to which the people look forward with joyful redemption, instead of with pain and fury, a day on which the reminder of the dead poet to the people . . . finally comes true:

Lightning after the thunder!

O that is only one day,

Only one until we are free!<sup>18</sup>

On November 6, 1887, Louis Lingg committed suicide in his cell. Finally on November 10, less than twenty-four hours before the scheduled execution, Governor Oglesby commuted the sentences of Michael Schwab and Samuel Fielden to life imprisonment. The mounting protests and appeals for clemency had saved two of the men. Spies, Parsons, Fischer, and Engel were hanged the next day.

Reitzel was invited to give one of the two funeral orations at the gravesite of the five martyrs. He began in anger: "Friends of freedom! My first word over these coffins shall be an accusation, not against the moneyed rabble . . . but instead against the workers of Chicago. For you have let five of the best, most noble, most persistent champions of your cause be murdered in your midst." Still he looked forward:



Here over these coffins is the place where a vow will be taken in every heart: We must realize what these people strived for, we want to give the rights of man, which we were long ago given on paper, practical value.

We are no Christians, who leave that to the rage of their lord God, we must take it ourselves with our own hands, and since we can anticipate no heaven, so we must do everything on earth that has to be done.

We must have organization so that the murder of law will not be permitted by those who have the power in their hands.

We must show to the world that the red flag is the symbol of love. . . .

These dead will truly and in truth live on. They were crucified on Good Friday. This Sunday is an Easter Sunday and must become a day of resurrection forever.

So certainly these trees will once again sprout green leaves, so certainly will these dead remain living within us, in the workers of Chicago, in the idealistic thoughts of humanity in the entire world.

Never has right been crushed with hangmen!

Never have gallows strangled the truth!

Never are there boundaries for thoughts!

We have no need to mourn for these dead. . . . as the cross was once the symbol of love, so the gallows will become in the nineteenth century the symbol of freedom. But we must mourn for our own humiliation, our own irresolution, our own cowardice.

Let us depart from these graves with the words of Herwegh in our hearts:

We have loved long enough,

We will finally hate!<sup>19</sup>

Like many others who committed themselves to the defense, Reitzel was never the same after these events. Despite his graveside claims for the future, he found it hard to maintain the optimistic spirit of most of his earlier writings. Yet he kept the faith he had vowed to keep at the graveside of the martyrs. The following year, he was a central figure in the factional struggle within Detroit's Turnverein between conservatives who wanted to divest the Turners of their radical image and radicals who saw the rationalist culture of the Turners as the bedrock of the social struggle. In 1890, he was the key spokesman for Detroit's German left when they opposed the plan of German businessmen for a German Day parade, a kind of German St. Patrick's Day. Reitzel and other leftists opposed such nationalistic displays on principle, but equally important they challenged the right of German businessmen to represent the German community in Detroit. "German Days," Reitzel wrote, "will be appropriate when the humane ideals that were driven out of Germany in 1849 can be returned." German Day went on, but all of the German unions boycotted the event. The first year, perhaps because of the novelty of the event (and also because many employers



gave their workers the day off) there was a large turnout. But by the following year, even the *Detroit Volksblatt*, the local German Democratic daily and one of the boosters of the event, admitted that "the parade was a colossal washout . . . a disgrace." Reitzel and his friends had shown their influence in the community.<sup>20</sup>

Although Reitzel had already been well known within German-American Freidenker circles, his role in the Haymarket Affair helped to broaden his reputation. His practice of publishing subscription receipts in his journal with the names and cities of out-of-town subscribers allows us to reconstruct the expansion of his readership. In the first year of publication, subscriptions trickled in quite slowly, at an average rate of only 13.2 per week, and nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of his out-of-town subscribers lived in Michigan or the surrounding states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin (see table 1). Four nearby cities with large German populations—Saginaw, Cleveland, Chicago, and Milwaukee—accounted for nearly half (46 percent) of the listed subscribers. There were few East Coast subscribers (13 percent in New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania combined)—only ten in New York City and five in Brooklyn, the nation's first and third largest cities, both with enormous German populations.<sup>21</sup>

In the following year his circulation started to expand beyond this narrow regional base of Michigan and surrounding states. The weekly rate of subscription receipts, an average of 21.9 per week, had nearly doubled from the previous year. East Coast readers now represented about one-sixth (16 percent) of the new out-of-town subscribers, and the percentage in the five state area of Michigan and surrounding states had fallen to closer to half (60 percent).

These trends in the geographic distribution of Reitzel's readership would continue until his death in 1898. In 1890, when the weekly rate of new subscriptions had risen to 32.7 per week, East Coast readers now represented one-fifth (20 percent) of new out-of-town subscribers, and the five-state Michigan area less than half (44 percent). The paper had at least scatterings of readers all around the country.

By 1895, as total circulation continued to expand to a peak of about 7000,<sup>22</sup> the weekly rate of subscription receipts had risen once again to 39.9 per week.<sup>23</sup> Reitzel's readership had become international. The original base of Michigan and the four adjoining states now provided only a little over a third (38 percent) of the subscribers. East Coast subscriptions had swelled to nearly another third (33 percent). Reitzel had subscribers in more than half a dozen countries, including Ecuador, Rumania, Germany, and Switzerland, as well as a large contingent in London.



Table 1  
Out-of-Town Subscribers of *Der arme Teufel*\*

	1885 <sup>1</sup>		1886 <sup>2</sup>		1890 <sup>3</sup>		1895 <sup>4</sup>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Northeast								
Boston	12	2.2	9	1.2	42	3.1	25	2.0
Other New England	10	1.9	13	1.7	35	2.6	69	5.6
New York City	10	1.9	34	4.6	58	4.3	133	10.8
Brooklyn	5	0.9	7	0.9	9	0.7	24	1.9
Other New York	5	0.9	13	1.7	32	2.4	20	1.6
New Jersey	9	1.7	34	4.6	26	1.9	83	6.7
Philadelphia	9	1.7	2	0.3	17	1.3	35	2.9
Other Pennsylvania	7	1.3	8	1.1	55	4.1	14	1.1
Total Northeast	67	12.7	120	16.1	274	20.4	403	32.6
Michigan Region								
Saginaw/E. Saginaw	39	7.4	17	2.3	9	0.7	3	0.2
Other Michigan	60	11.4	59	7.9	80	6.0	10	0.8
Cleveland	99	18.8	94	12.6	130	9.7	6	0.5
Other Ohio	28	5.3	72	9.7	60	4.5	58	4.7
Indiana	8	1.5	30	4.0	62	4.6	42	3.4
Chicago	70	13.3	43	5.8	187	13.9	209	16.9
Other Illinois	35	6.6	40	5.4	38	2.8	36	2.9
Milwaukee	33	6.3	81	10.9	7	0.5	73	5.9
Other Wisconsin	14	2.7	12	1.6	14	1.0	28	2.3
Total Mich. region	386	73.2	448	60.1	587	43.7	465	37.6
Other Midwest								
Minn'lis/St. Paul	0	0.0	41	5.5	8	0.6	36	2.9
Other Minnesota	1	0.2	6	0.8	3	0.2	47	3.8
St. Louis	23	4.4	53	7.1	99	7.4	115	9.3
Other Missouri	0	0.0	10	1.3	40	3.0	16	1.3
Iowa	4	0.8	17	2.3	14	1.0	14	1.1
Total other Midwest	28	5.3	127	17.0	164	12.2	228	18.4
Other U.S.								
D.C.	29	5.5	20	2.7	42	3.1	2	0.2
California	6	1.1	8	1.1	103	7.7	22	1.8
All other	8	1.5	19	2.5	161	12.0	63	5.1
Total other U.S.	43	8.2	47	6.3	306	22.8	87	7.0
Foreign	3	0.6	3	0.4	11	0.8	54	4.4
Total	527		745		1342		1237	



Table 1 *continued*

	1885 <sup>1</sup>		1886 <sup>2</sup>		1890 <sup>3</sup>		1895 <sup>4</sup>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Weekly average subscriptions received	13.2		21.9		32.7		39.9	

- 1. Subscription receipts listed May 9, 1885, through Feb. 6, 1886.
  - 2. Subscription receipts listed Feb. 13, 1886, through Oct. 2, 1886.
  - 3. Subscription receipts listed Jan. 4, 1890, through Oct. 11, 1890.
  - 4. Subscription receipts listed Mar. 23, 1895, through Oct. 19, 1895.
- \*Based on receipts for subscriptions published in the issues during the time intervals listed below. Since some subscribers paid up as much as several years in advance, the totals for each location may more accurately reflect the rate of new subscriptions rather than the cumulative total of subscribers in good standing at that location. In some cities subscriptions were apparently collected by officers of Arme Teufel clubs or Turnervereins and sent in several dozen at a time. Sometimes there were long intervals during which no subscriptions were received from a particular city, and then a batch of several dozen appeared all at once. Some of the anomalies in the table may be the result of this procedure.

It is difficult to judge the relative importance of local Detroit readership as compared to the out-of-town subscribers, since Reitzel never published receipts or other information about his local subscribers. If we subtract the known out-of-town subscribers from the estimated total circulation figures, it would appear that his local readership in the mid-1880s was no more than a fifth of his estimated circulation of 2,500–3,000 in 1887.<sup>24</sup>

Judging from the relatively large number of advertisements placed by local small businesses (several dozen display ads in each issue), one might assume that the local readership was more substantial, but many of these advertisers may have been admirers who used advertising as a way of supporting the paper financially. That must have been the case with out-of-town advertisers. While collectively the out-of-town subscribers represented a substantial audience, there were not enough subscribers in any one place to justify advertising from a business point of view. Many did nonetheless. The Anheuser-Busch Brewery ran a large display ad (close to a quarter-page) in every issue for years. Like many of Reitzel’s readers, who formed local Arme Teufel



Table 2

Occupations of *Der arme Teufel* Subscribers, 1886

	N	%
<i>High white collar</i>		
Manufacturer	13	
Professional <sup>1</sup>	17	
Wholesale or large merchant	7	
Brewery owner	18	
Office manager, business executive, real estate or insurance agency proprietor	10	
Government official	3	
Misc. large proprietor <sup>2</sup>	4	
Total	72	26.4
<i>Low white collar</i>		
Small retailer <sup>3</sup>	38	
Saloonkeeper, restaurant or bar owner	66	
Bookkeeper, clerk, cashier	17	
Salesman, agent, notary, collector	12	
Teacher	5	
Artisanal proprietor <sup>4</sup>	15	
Total	153	56.0
<i>Skilled worker</i> <sup>5</sup>		
Total	37	13.6
<i>Unskilled worker</i>		
Total	11	4.0
Total N	273	

1. Physician, lawyer, architect, chemist (Ph.D.), editor, publisher, orchestra director, school principal or proprietor.

2. Hotel owner, meeting hall owner, recreational park proprietor.

3. Groceries, drugs, books, produce, wines, liquor, furniture, clothing, shoes, hardware.

4. Includes individuals in artisanal trades with a listed business address or a display ad; probably some of those listed under skilled workers were also self-employed.

5. Tailor, cook, draughtsman, bricklayer, polisher, engraver, lithographer, jeweler, watchmaker, cooper, weaver, armorer, frescoer, dyer, printer, cigarmaker, machinist, glassworker, roller, barber, furniture or cabinetmaker, foreman; the only one of these occupations with more than three listings was furniture and cabinetmaker with six.

Sources: *Der arme Teufel*, Nov. 28, 1885; Jan. 2, 1886; Jan. 23, 1886; Feb. 27, 1886; Apr. 10, 1886; May 1, 1886; June 19, 1886; July 31, 1886; Sept. 25, 1886; Oct. 9, 1886; Oct. 16, 1886; Oct. 23, 1886; Nov. 27, 1886; Dec. 11, 1886; Dec. 18, 1886; Dec. 25, 1886; 1886 city directories for Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, St. Louis, Grand Rapids, Washington, D.C., Indianapolis, Minneapolis, New York City, and Milwaukee.



clubs around the country where they met to discuss articles in the paper and to boost its circulation, these business owners must have been admirers and soulmates.

Perhaps not surprisingly, given the paper's emphasis on literature and high culture, the readership of *Der arme Teufel* was decidedly middle-class (see table 2). While in most American cities in the late nineteenth century more than three-quarters of employed Germans were in working-class occupations,<sup>25</sup> only about one-sixth of Reitzel's identifiable subscribers in 1886 were skilled or unskilled workers. The single largest occupational group among identifiable subscribers, saloonkeepers and restaurant owners, comprised over 24 percent of identified subscribers, more than all working-class occupations combined. Of course, given the tendency of city directories (the source for identifying occupations) to underreport workers and the likelihood that many workers patronized the bar owners who subscribed to provide reading matter for their customers, these figures may understate the working-class readership somewhat. But even making allowances for a few extra working-class readers, it seems clear that Reitzel's readership was proportionately much greater among businessmen, white-collar employees, and professionals than among industrial workers. Most of the identified workers worked in small-scale consumer crafts, hardly any in large-scale heavy industries.

Occupations, of course, give us only the barest clues to the background and worldview of Reitzel's following. The "Briefkarten" from his readers, which appeared regularly, give more insight. The letter writers were enthusiastic admirers of Reitzel. They were deeply committed to the cause of human liberation, but judging from the contents of their correspondence, like Reitzel they took far more pleasure in poring over their Goethe, Schiller, or Heine than in the ideological polemics which consumed their German brethren within the organized socialist movement. They met regularly with each other in Arme Teufel clubs or Turnvereine in Chicago, Cleveland, or Milwaukee or in little outposts of Germania like New Ulm, Minnesota, or Sauk Center, Wisconsin, seeking kindred spirits for intellectual stimulation and Gemütlichkeit. The Chicago Arme Teufel Club wrote Reitzel in 1897 to describe their celebrations for the beginning of his fourteenth year of publication: "Chicago friends celebrate the beginning of v.14 with lectures, songs, friendly hanging around . . . free drinking, and world commentary, and toasting." A Chicago saloonkeeper captured the spirit of Reitzel admirers when he advised fellow readers they would find at his establishment (named Nirwana):



Mein Bier ist gut!  
Mein Wein ist klar!  
And freedom beckons from afar.<sup>26</sup>

By the 1890s, Reitzel's writings emphasized these cultural concerns even more than in the past. Whether he wrote about nature, about religion, about history, or about literature, he still battled against hypocrisy, against ignorance, against all cultural or political Philistines, but both his choices of topics and his language displayed less immediate political engagement than they had in the late 1880s. He wrote a long serialized account of his early years in America and one of his most imaginative works—the reminiscences of a waiter who worked in a Stratford tavern next door to Shakespeare's home between 1616 and 1618, the last two years of Shakespeare's life.<sup>27</sup> Reitzel's Shakespeare, clearly a voice for Reitzel's own deepest concerns, rejected the superficial praise of his neighbors as he acidly condemned their provincialism and puritanical narrow-mindedness.

By 1894 Reitzel contracted the tuberculosis which had killed his mother. The disease attacked his spine and other large bones, and he became an invalid virtually confined to his bed. Yet, with the help of friends, *Der arme Teufel* still appeared weekly with perfect regularity. At least by the standards of small radical literary journals, it was enjoying ever-increasing success. Despite his illness, Reitzel continued to write with the same wry, self-deprecating wit which had always been his hallmark.

But the optimistic dreams of his youth seemed to recede ever further from reality. Many German-American socialists looked with pride and enthusiasm to the electoral rise of the German Social Democratic party as a harbinger of the socialist future. Even in America, by the late 1890s the small and poorly organized socialist movement showed signs of expansion beyond its heretofore narrow base of German émigrés. Reitzel was unimpressed. Militarism still ruled Germany, and money ruled ever more firmly in America.

In November 1897, six months before his death, inevitably prodded by the anniversary of the Haymarket executions, he looked back on the events which had marked his life. "Has it really already been ten years since the working people escorted their dead through the streets of Chicago?" Thinking back on the anger and sadness of that day, somehow one event, "which unfortunately I cannot forget," was fixed in his mind. The mourners' procession had just left the railroad station with the coffins bound for Waldheim Cemetery, when "a chap . . . like a sailor on a furlough sprang up at the head of the line brandishing



with hurrahs an American flag. . . . He danced like a harlequin to the timbres of the funeral march . . . and . . . shouted 'Not a damned Dutch, not a damned Anarchist can take the flag away from me, the flag of my country.' " The marchers, fearful of police reprisal if they interfered, grimly did their best to ignore him. "When I behold the November twilight I must ask myself have ten years really flown by since that day? It seems to me that a century has passed, a century in which nothing has changed, in which only crime has been heaped upon crime and which has brought no atonement, none."

He was sick in spirit as well as body. "I shudder to look into the future. A morning must truly come, but first this horrible long night! I think about the past and see how the stepping-stones of freedom sink ever deeper in the morass." It was now twenty-five years since the Prussian monarchy had ascended to the throne of the German Empire, dashing the hopes of the revolutionary nationalists of 1848 who had sought German unification in a free state. Georg Herwegh, the revolutionary and poet who had been his mother's friend, had still sung with optimism in 1873 about the disappointed dreams of '48:

Eighteen hundred and forty-eight,  
When the spring cracked through the ice—  
Days of February, days of March,  
Wasn't it proletarian hearts—  
Which full of hope first awakened,  
Eighteen hundred and forty-eight?!

But we poor, sold and betrayed,  
Think of proletarian deeds,  
Still not all Marches have passed,  
Eighteen hundred and seventy-three.

Thinking of Herwegh, Reitzel wrote another verse:

Eighteen hundred and ninety-eight,  
Do you still believe in the freedom-struggle?  
Where is the harvest of the bloody seeds,  
Where are the proletarian deeds?  
Rules not the same old evil  
Eighteen hundred and ninety-eight?<sup>28</sup>

Robert Reitzel died April 1, 1898. His last poem was published a few days later:

Life is the sultry day,  
Death is the cool night,  
It grows dark already, I feel sleepy,  
The day has made me tired.



Over my bed rises a tree,  
In which a young nightingale sings,  
She sings about true love,  
I hear it as in a dream.<sup>29</sup>

Reitzel's friend Martin Drescher attempted to carry on after Reitzel's death. But *Der arme Teufel* had been too much Reitzel's personal vehicle. Within two years, the subscriptions had fallen by 60 percent, and in 1900 Drescher ceased publication.<sup>30</sup> Reitzel's admirers still sought to publicize his work, in two posthumous collections of his writing.<sup>31</sup>

Despite such efforts, Reitzel's reputation barely outlived him. As Paul Buhle has argued, figures like Reitzel have received scant attention from American historians, even historians of the left, who often have not appreciated the ethnic basis of much of American radicalism or have lacked the language skills to enter the cultural worlds of the non-English-speaking population. In the generation after his death, perhaps Reitzel's reputation faded quickly because his brand of emotional and literary radicalism was out of step with the increasing dominance of "scientific" socialism over radical intellectual life. Yet for the generations of radical German émigrés who left Germany before the hegemony of Marxism, Reitzel had been more than a quixotic figure. His concerns were theirs. They too were Arme Teufels dreaming of the birth of freedom in a better world.<sup>32</sup>

## NOTES

1. See, for example, the recent biography of Reitzel by Ulrike Heider, *Der arme Teufel*, which emphasizes Reitzel's commitment to sexual emancipation, free love, feminism, homosexual rights, and individual freedom; and also Paul Buhle's essay in this volume.

2. For a suggestive description of radical Germans in antebellum Buffalo, see David A. Gerber, *Making of an American Pluralism*, esp. pp. 196–99, 227–35.

3. Biographical information on Reitzel, in addition to Reitzel's own memoirs cited below, is taken from Heider and from Adolf Eduard Zucker, *Robert Reitzel*. For capsule accounts of the activities of Hecker, Herwegh, and Blum, see Peter N. Stearns, *Eighteen Forty-Eight*, pp. 141–42, 158.

4. Zucker, *Robert Reitzel*, p. 11.

5. "Ich liebe, weil ich lieben muss,  
ich lieb nach einem Himmelschluss,  
und wenn ich Keinen lieben kann,  
fang ich, verflucht! zu saufen an."

Robert Reitzel, "Abenteuer eines Grünen," *Des armen Teufel gesammelte Schriften*, 1:37–149, 43. The following account of Reitzel's early career in the



United States is taken from this and is cited by page number in the text. The translations are my own.

6. *Der arme Teufel*, Jan. 5, 1895.
7. Richard Oestreicher, *Solidarity and Fragmentation*, pp. 33, 43–52, 120–27.
8. *Der arme Teufel*, Dec. 6, 1884.
9. *Der arme Teufel*, Jan. 10, 17, 1885; Mar. 20, 1886.
10. *Der arme Teufel*, May 2, Dec. 12, 1885.
11. Reitzel, "Ein Protest" (speech to the Detroit protest meeting of Oct. 16, 1887), *Des armen Teufel gesammelte Schriften*, 3:117, 123.
12. A notable exception was Joseph Labadie, the editor of the *Detroit Labor Leaf*, whose defense of the Haymarket defendants and analysis of the significance of the event mirrored Reitzel's. After reading one of Labadie's "Cranky Notions" columns, Reitzel wrote, "I despair no more about the Americans." *Der arme Teufel*, Apr. 24, May 22, 1886.
13. Reitzel, "Vae Victis!" *Des armen Teufel gesammelte Schriften*, 3:91–93.
14. Reitzel, *Des armen Teufel gesammelte Schriften*, 3:109, 118.
15. Reitzel, *Des armen Teufel gesammelte Schriften*, 3:110, 127–28; Henry David, *History of the Haymarket Affair*, pp. 347–71.
16. Reitzel, *Des armen Teufel gesammelte Schriften*, 3:122, 126.
17. *Dies irae*: day of wrath, from a hymn sung in the requiem mass; *dies illa*: in Reitzel's rather idiosyncratic translation, the day of salvation.
18. David, *History of the Haymarket Affair*, pp. 382–88; Reitzel, "Dies Irae," *Des armen Teufel gesammelte Schriften*, 3:130–33.

Blitz auf ein Wetterschlag!  
O wag es doch nur einen Tag,  
Nur einen frei zu sein!

19. Reitzel, "Am Grabe," *Des armen Teufel gesammelte Schriften*, 3:142–44.
20. Oestreicher, *Solidarity and Fragmentation*, pp. 43–50.
21. The figures for Saginaw are combined totals for Saginaw and East Saginaw, separate municipalities in 1885 but united shortly thereafter. Saginaw had a very active labor movement, was the scene of a massive lumber mill strike in 1885, and was the home of Tom Barry, a member of the Knights of Labor General Executive Board who was also elected to the Michigan legislature as a Labor Democrat in 1884. For more on Barry and description of the Saginaw valley lumber strike, see my "Limits of Labor Radicalism."
22. Heider, *Der arme Teufel*, p. 80; Zucker, *Robert Reitzel*, p. 49.
23. The weekly subscription rates, if annualized, do not come close to the claimed circulation figures. As the subscription receipts show, many subscribers supported the paper by sending in money for several years in advance. This probably explains the discrepancy.
24. *Der arme Teufel*, Dec. 3, 1887. I tabulated a total of 1272 out-of-town subscribers between May 1885 (when Reitzel first began publishing subscription receipts) and October 1886. I have not gone through these lists systematically to check for repeated names, but even a cursory examination makes it clear



that the proportion of renewals by people appearing earlier on my list is very small (not surprising—the time span covers only a little over a year and early in the publication's history). The total of 1272 does not include subscribers prior to May 1885 or in the period (more than a year) between the end of my tabulations and the appearance of Reitzel's circulation estimate. There is no way to estimate initial and early subscribers before May 1885, but judging from the rate of new subscriptions in 1886 there must have been well over a thousand additional new out-of-town subscribers between October 1886 and December 1887, leaving *at most* 500–600 Detroit subscribers, using the high (3000) circulation estimate. Reitzel's circulation estimate is corroborated by Karl J. R. Arndt and May E. Olson, *German-American Newspapers and Periodicals*, p. 212, who used circulation figures from the Ayer's directories of newspapers.

25. Nora Faires, "Occupational Patterns of German-Americans," esp. pp. 40–41.

26. *Der arme Teufel*, Nov. 13, 1897.

27. Reitzel, "Ein Herbst-Traum," *Des armen Teufel gesammelte Schriften*, 2: 79–119.

28. "Von trüben zu trüben Tagen," *Der arme Teufel*, Nov. 13, 1897.

Achtzehnhundert vierzig und acht,  
Als im Lenze das Eis erkracht—  
Tage des Februar, Tage des Märzen,  
Waren es nicht Proletarierherzen—  
Die voll Hoffnung zuerst erwacht  
Achtzehnhundert vierzig und acht?!

Aber wir Armen, verkehrt und verraten,  
Denken der Proletarier-Taten,  
Noch sind nicht all Märze vorbei,  
Achtzehnhundert siebzig und drei.

Achtzehnhundert neunzig und acht,  
Glaubst du noch an die Freiheitsschlacht?  
Wo ist die Ernte der blutigen Saaten,  
Wo sind die Proletariertaten?  
Herrscht nicht die alte Niedertracht  
Achtzehnhundert neunzig und acht?

29. Heider, *Der arme Teufel*, p. 121.

Das Leben ist der schwüle Tag,  
Der Tod das ist die kühle Nacht  
Es dämmert schon, mich schläfert,  
Der Tag hat mich müde gemacht.

Über mein Bett erhebt ein Baum,  
Darin singt die junge Nachtigall,  
Sie singt von lauter Liebe,  
Ich hör' es sogar im Traum.



30. Martin Drescher edited *Der Herold*, the weekly organ of Detroit's Central Labor Union, from August 1897 until April 1898. During Reitzel's last few months Drescher spent every night at Reitzel's sickbed, reading to him and helping him continue to put out *Der arme Teufel*. Zucker, *Robert Reitzel*, pp. 24, 48–49.

31. Robert Reitzel, *Mein Buch* and *Des armen Teufel gesammelte Schriften*.

32. Paul Buhle, in this volume; Paul Buhle, "Jews and American Communism," esp. 9–11, 28–31. See also several of the fine studies of ethnic radicalism in "*Struggle a Hard Battle*."



Paul Buhle

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## Ludwig Lore and the *New Yorker Volkszeitung*: The Twilight of the German-American Socialist Press

The *New Yorker Volkszeitung* (NYVZ) (1878–1932) is the historical standard for American Marxist newspapers. Among those founded in the same pioneer era of the modern left, only the *Chicagoer Arbeiterzeitung* and the *Philadelphia Tageblatt* had similar staying power, and none had the prestige, intellectual leadership, or sustained national impact of the NYVZ. Others, such as the *Jewish Daily Forward*, the *Appeal to Reason*, or the *Daily Worker* have had larger circulations. But the NYVZ truly ruled American Marxist organization at various times and places. To its last days, it took a unique, essentially independent position anchored outside the socialist and Communist parties proper, in the fraternal societies and the German immigrant-based unions. Therein lay its strength and its longevity.

Only the NYVZ of the 1920s, i.e., after the Bolshevik Revolution, has received the attention of prestigious scholars in previous generations, and then only in the light of cold war politics. It is a measure of American historians' linguistic provincialism that only in recent years have some scholars—mostly Germans—begun to examine the paper in its own right.<sup>1</sup> My small contribution here is a bit of initial "revisionism" in both directions, in tune with the emerging historiography.

Theodore Draper's *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (1960),<sup>2</sup> long considered a standard in the field of research on the Communist party, has been challenged by a new generation of scholars who have examined many related subjects—in addition to the Communist party proper—with far greater attention to social-historical context. Leaving aside neotraditional scholars, either dogmatically Communist or anti-



Communist, most of the newer works on radicalism (or Marxism) view Communism as only one element in the picture. The writing of a more-developed history of American anarchism, socialism, labor Zionism, and Communism, labor movements and labor reforms, is well under-way. By and large, these studies are not primarily "political" in the old sense of "history is past politics." Rather, following the lead of E. P. Thompson and Herbert Gutman, they have attempted the reconstruction of daily life for the groups and individuals considered. In order to do so, they have turned to the non-English-language periodicals as the single most useful source.<sup>3</sup>

Earlier studies of the NYVZ by socialist intellectuals had described it and its milieu in passing, with insight but without depth or obvious additional research. NYVZ writers themselves, in the various NYVZ anniversary issues over the decades, devoted vast quantities of prose to nostalgic reflections. (Probably the most important contribution to scholarship to this point has indeed been the reprinting of essays from the 1888, 1903, and 1928 editions, by the Labor Newspaper Preservation Project in Bremen.)<sup>4</sup> These "primary sources" help us greatly in understanding the autonomous history of the paper and its special role in its last days. We will see how little the phases of American Communism altered the NYVZ in its essence.

The NYVZ took the field in 1878, following a monumental fund-raising campaign among German-American workers in New York and New Jersey. From its first day to its last, it represented a constituency broadly socialist but only to a minor degree made up of members of the various left-wing parties. Its ownership lay in the NYVZ corporation—not in the hands of any political entity as such—and it was answerable in the final sense only to itself and its constituents. The paper's readership and financial stability rested upon the German-speaking immigrant communities of the area, predominantly working-class but also small middle class. Its back columns were filled with notices of the "Vereine und Versammlungen," the sickness-and-death-benefit societies that the Germans originated around the socialist movement, and those of the "Sozialistische Liedertafel" singing societies, the picnics, winter balls, and other such working-class entertainments. Its advertising base—physicians, patent medicine companies, local restaurants, beer and tobacco companies, and a wide range of immigrant service firms—reflected the daily lives of its readers. With a scattering of 48ers, most of these readers had immigrated as children or young adults in the 1860s or 1870s. After a final major wave in the early 1880s, the numbers of new German immigrants decreased rapidly, and the NYVZ



readership became the *alte Genossen* (and *Genossinnen*), a generation with bittersweet feelings about old and adopted homelands, sharing their experiences, hopes, and fears together until their final days.

Their relationship with the American radical movement shifted decisively over the 1880s and 1890s, forming a pattern which remained in place through the 1920s. At the NYVZ's founding, and for a decade or so after, they viewed themselves as the intellectual and spiritual vanguard of a working class on the verge of class-conscious awakening. Among dozens of radical papers founded in the wake of the 1877 railroad strike, only a handful of publications (none in English) survived. Among craft unions, German-American workers who read the NYVZ and its sister papers exerted a vastly disproportionate role, challenged only by the often conservative and almost invariably antisocialist Irish-Americans. Far ahead of their fellow-workers in the realm of ideas, German-Americans tended naturally to cluster among themselves, discussing socialist ideas and establishing their various fraternal and social institutions. This status placed the NYVZ, during the labor upswelling of 1884–86, in the ambiguous position of ideological superiority to, and at the same time, widespread physical absence from, the meteoric rise of the largely Irish-American Knights of Labor. Readers of the NYVZ participated in all strike activities, often leading the way. They hailed every political advance. But, as Friedrich Engels complained, they failed to lead the revolutionary column into a revived and broadened socialist movement. In the aftermath of Haymarket they faced a veritable Red Scare in which their relative cultural insularity proved their abiding strength. Following Henry George's mayoral campaign, which they had supported even to the extent of funding an English-language organ, they saw that the grandest hopes of coalition with other groups could go to smash, leaving them wholly dependent upon their own self-created durability.

What lessons could be drawn from these experiences? They took the cautious approach, determined to nurture what resources they possessed—above all the NYVZ itself. By the late 1890s, the Socialist Labor party, which had never attained a national membership of more than 20 percent of the NYVZ's readership, became (via its national executive ruling body meeting in New York City) more the organ of the NYVZ than vice versa. In 1889, the NYVZ-dominated NEC suspended the national German-language organ as too critical of unions, and in effect subjected the entire SLP to a *coup de main*.<sup>5</sup>

A decade later, responding to the dual-unionist strategies of English-language socialist leader Daniel DeLeon, the NYVZ virtually repeated the maneuver. They had initially welcomed DeLeon, as well as the



*People*, an English-language weekly, which served as DeLeon's mouthpiece. They did not foresee that DeLeon would accuse them of bureaucratic conservatism and threaten to overthrow their plan of union consolidation and patient propaganda. Some socialists bolted rather quickly, including a Jewish group which established a daily Yiddish socialist paper, the *Forward*, almost overnight exceeding the NYVZ in readership and journalistic innovation. The NYVZ waited until 1899, challenging DeLeon for SLP leadership and then sponsoring a rival SLP which would merge into the new Socialist party. Meanwhile, with the steady growth of the immigrant left, the NYVZ was only one paper among dozens in various non-English languages. At the opening of the new century, the hegemony of the NYVZ and the German proletarian element it represented on the left had definitely been transcended.<sup>6</sup>

German speakers had already adapted themselves to this new reality. The entrance of new Jewish immigrants and native-born Americans during the 1890s permitted a sense of ethnic collectivity, both precursor and counterpart to the mass-based and mature "American" movement the *Volkszeitung* had long awaited. Their unabashed reverence (like that of the Jewish radicals) for Eugene Debs, leader of the unified socialist movement, symbolized their acceptance of a narrower gauge for their own special identity. The role of this aging group of craftsmen and their families can hardly be overestimated, however. According to Charles Leinenweber, as late as 1916 they remained the largest single group in New York City Socialist membership ranks.<sup>7</sup>

Their status among the ethnic socialist press has other features as well. In general, the NYVZ early gained and long sustained a reputation for literary quality unsurpassed in the radical press. Jewish radicals, it is fair to say, had to *develop* their Yiddish political-literary style. Germans had only to build upon the *Vormärz* and the classic German literary tradition, serializing from past and current German works. The NYVZ editors and staff writers included some of the most prestigious, talented immigrant radical intellectuals. To mention only a few is sufficient: Adolf Douai, famed pedagogue, former abolitionist editor and novelist, and an early leader of the American socialist press; Sergius Schewitsch, charismatic public lecturer (the only German-American who could speak with great facility to English-language audiences) and colorful journalist; and Hermann Schlüter, an early historian of American socialism, with the detailed *Erste Internationale in Amerika* (1911) among other works to his credit.<sup>8</sup>

The NYVZ's final leading editor, Ludwig Lore, was, like several of his precursors, a German Jew. A university graduate, well-tempered in the German Socialist movement before his immigration to the United



States in 1903, he had (unlike most of his NYVZ predecessors) a rich political life as an intellectual and activist outside the German sector. Along with distinguished Marxist economist Louis Boudin and the first ideologue of American Communism, Louis C. Fraina, Lore also edited the *Class Struggle* (1917–19), a journal which bridged the gap between the left of the Socialist party and the mainstream of American Communism.<sup>9</sup>

But it was within the German Socialist Federation, and the *Volkszeitung*, that Lore's influence was greatest. As a typical NYVZ intellectual, he manifested his influence with careful regard to his constituency's inclinations but without much regard for prevailing orthodoxies. The aging—in many cases quite aged—German-American socialists of 1919 wanted a "pure socialism." They believed they had found it in Communism, and they had a great deal of difficulty understanding the factional wrangling that preceded and followed the break with the Socialist party. They were altogether willing to be "Communists"; they thought highly of the Russian Revolution. They did not expect to be leaders of the emerging left movement. But they were adamantly against losing their own special identity and the right to conduct their own collective affairs in their own fashion, as they had done under previous party regimes.<sup>10</sup>

Theodore Draper rightly says that the Communist leaders in the United States resented the power of ethnic leaders and ethnic institutions outside ostensible party discipline. Of course, Socialist party leaders (including a future leading Communist or two) had likewise resented such power, as had Socialist Labor party leaders before them. The invective that Communist functionaries threw at Lore and at the Germans had a parallel in Daniel DeLeon's day. But the rhetoric had changed. And the critics had the unprecedented (if for them vicarious) prestige of an accomplished revolution in Russia behind their demands. These leaders attempted to seize all ethnic institutions during the 1920s, and they earned for their movement mainly the widespread disaffection (in many cases, disaffiliation) of long-standing fraternal activists. But even among ideological deviants, Lore and the NYVZ were *sui generis*.<sup>11</sup>

In the first place, the NYVZ had more the feel of a tabloid magazine than a newspaper. My interviews with free-lance writers and Federated Press representatives who wrote for or visited Lore confirm that this format suited his personality and approach. He was a jolly man whose political and aesthetic inclinations fit no prescribed categories. If he enjoyed a particular writer, in any of the many languages he could understand, he ordered translations made, or did them himself. He



printed classics galore, but he also went out of his way to encourage young artists. He did not, personally, have any great immediate hopes for the dramatic transformation of the United States. Rather, the NYVZ set itself to create an enjoyable publication for the aging reader, whose main political activities centered around fraternal, support, and leisure activities. Unlike the other immigrant papers whose editors had to battle for left positions (likewise readership) against social democratic or conservative elements in their own communities, the NYVZ already had all the readers it would ever require. Lore needed to hold onto them, through chains of loyalty and the charms of literary excellence.<sup>12</sup>

An average issue of the NYVZ in the early 1920s, then, featured news from Europe (especially Germany). For a time, it had special correspondents in Germany (among them, Max Baginsky, a veteran anarchist), and prided itself on being the only German-language U.S. paper with such direct, thorough coverage of the homeland. Reports from Russia and Eastern Europe—so long as the NYVZ's affiliation with Communism persisted—came directly from the Comintern services, supplemented by serializations of Lenin and others. On the other hand, news about and official endorsement by characteristically German union locals of waiters, cigarmakers, brewers, and butchers remained prominent in the back pages (again, very differently from most other Communist papers), part of the usual description of club, society, and union activities. The NYVZ relegated American events, aside from trade-union news, largely to the writers of the decidedly left but also politically independent Federated News Service. Was this a Communist paper in anything but name? Lore himself clearly thought so, and the readers expressing themselves agreed. The paper endlessly justified its separation from the Socialist party, even when it offered a strange variety of reasons. The socialists (as revealed in their 1920 election campaign) failed to oppose prohibition, for one thing! The socialists were old-fashioned (a remarkable charge from users of a literary style fading in Germany). The socialists' concept of unity was only appearance, since its mentality was dominated by "kleinbürgerlichen Schlacken," petit bourgeois schlock which had nothing in common with the class struggle.<sup>13</sup>

The principal argument—perhaps inevitably a European one—was aimed not at American socialists but at the parties of the Second International. They had betrayed socialism in voting war credits; and they (most obviously the German party) had supported the repression of postwar revolutionary tendencies. "Had it not been for 'Democratic' Socialism, we would have had a Soviet Europe Today!" as one of Lore's editorials put the matter. And the lesson followed: "The danger is too



great, that one day, when the time comes, the American proletariat, will hand over to Capital the 'great unity movement' of the working-class and be betrayed. The example of Europe alarms and terrifies."<sup>14</sup> It was within the perspective of eventual revolutionary challenge to American capitalism—an argument that could be read as fundamentally pessimistic about the ability of the American working class to take matters in hand—that the embrace of American Communism made good sense to the NYVZ's traditions. Communism, successful in Russia despite all obstacles, had established the pattern for the future. One could not be left behind politically. The NYVZ naturally carried the public news of American Communism as the saga of the struggle in the United States.

And yet . . . form and content conflicted, sometimes wildly. Like his readers, Lore was a million miles from "Socialist Realism." Even in the era of "literary NEP (New Economic Policy)," most Communist publications (the Yiddish *Freiheit*, likewise very literary, was a partial exception) placed limits upon the types of contributors and contributions permitted. Lore regularly exceeded the literary license taken by the early *New Masses*, clearly billed as a nonparty publication. He published the Wobbly poet Covington Hall and the feminist science fiction writer Miriam Allen DeFord, also reprinting Jack London, Guy de Maupassant, and many others. In politics, Lore preferred the pre-1919-style left, feminist-ultraradical Sylvia Pankhurst, anarchist Gustav Landauer, Rosa Luxemburg's companion Paul Frölich, and he probably published more Trotsky than any American newspaper (including the Trotskyist press) managed to make available for a decade. The paper also retained the best women's column in a left U.S. newspaper.<sup>15</sup>

In other ways, the NYVZ set itself off from the contemporary Communists. Perhaps the most touching feature (certainly for the historian, but also likely for the contemporary reader) was the loving obituary, the tribute to long decades of faithful struggle. Karoline Ott, for instance, was lauded as "eine treue, hingebungsvolle Proletarierin," perhaps the highest compliment from a movement which believed ardently in its rank-and-filers.<sup>16</sup> The most outstanding quality, manifest in the occasional special issues, was the historical sense of self, of immigrant memories both from old Germany—now vanished but still dear to memory—and from nineteenth-century America, equally long gone. Another striking feature, in our perspective from the 1990s, is the increasingly "green" character of nature lore. The "Friends of Nature, Inc." (a hiking and nature-appreciation society, with its main camp in Midvale, New Jersey) came to dominate an increasing amount of



space during the 1920s, the descriptions of past and forthcoming hikes a veritable manifesto on the eternal qualities which socialists should strive to understand.<sup>17</sup>

In essence, then, the *NYVZ* of the 1920s overlaid Communist interpretation of developments abroad, and a generally Communist policy at home, upon the long-standing structure and assumptions of the newspaper's milieu, and upon Lore's literary tastes. From a strictly political point of view, it was a Communist paper. But any sort of deconstruction, let alone an attempted historical reconstruction of the average *NYVZ* loyalist's "reading" of the paper, would take us in a very different direction. No one could describe the *NYVZ* as postmodern, yet its extraordinary layering, its sets of assumptions from different historic periods or different geopolitical circumstances, render it an artifact with multiple meanings.

Evolution of the *NYVZ* continued against the background of fierce internal conflict in the 1920s American Communist movement, dragging the *NYVZ*, against the will of its editor and readers, into the mire. Draper portrays one dimension of the conflict between Lore and the Communist leaders with some accuracy, but without a sense for the larger symbolic issues which were at stake. For the *NYVZ* veteran, the struggle for political, electoral socialism in the United States had taken decades of self-sacrifice and many reversals. Readers of the paper had never been happy with the "underground" mentality of the early Communist movement, because they viewed hyperrevolutionary rhetoric as the worst possible response to repression. The formation of a legal Workers party in 1922, and the beginnings of a political campaign structure (minimal though it was), encouraged them greatly.

On the other hand, they drew the line at subordinating left politics to the agenda of the American petite bourgeoisie, fearing the prospect of fusion—the reform strategy that they had combated throughout the history of the socialist movement. Since their own unhappy experience with Henry George's United Labor mayoralty campaign in 1886, they had viewed fusion as the onset of virtual treason. They therefore resisted, along with many other formerly socialist ethnic activists, the prospect of Communist identification with a farmer-labor party in 1924. Lore himself hammered away at the Wisconsin Socialist party leader Victor Berger for suggesting an arrangement with Progressive Robert La Follette. Behind that polemic lay discomfiture with an entire mode of activity that had been adopted, with Lenin's approbation, in an effort to locate the mainstream of American life. In Draper's account, Comintern wrangling over the farmer-labor party strategy not only wrecked the American Communists' initial following in the



Chicago Federation of Labor and among farmers from Wisconsin to the Dakotas but also exposed the overriding difference between Lore and other Communist leaders: he could not be forced to take discipline. As a closer study of California ethnic Communists reveals, Lore actually articulated a feeling widespread among established ethnic entities. Resistance against the farmer-labor strategy did not have to be whipped up, as in Draper's account; it did have to be articulated, and the NYVZ took the lead in this context.<sup>18</sup>

Framed by such subtleties, the larger differences in style and substance began to grow more evident. German-Americans had always worked within the existing unions, in many cases had founded the organizations. But they had almost invariably, within these mostly German, AFL, or independent organizations, disdained to hide their political affiliations. To the German-American worker, even a Republican one, "socialism" was not a strange concept and generally no cause for panic. But to many of the immigrant and native-born workers who would make up the bulk of the successful industrial movement in the 1930s (for which earlier prewar, wartime, and immediate post-war labor activism had been a rehearsal), socialism was an alien idea which community religious leaders and other trusted "respectables" condemned. Toward them (and, in many cases, as protection against the outside world), Communist factory workers increasingly adopted the pose of militants who ostensibly reported and acted upon immediate grievances. The NYVZ had always opposed dissimulation. As in the case of the proposed farmer-labor policies, its readers wanted to be socialists openly and proudly, without evasions or reservations.<sup>19</sup> Outside particular ethnic pockets, the days of this old-fashioned political approach had ended, and the Communists had merely adapted (or maladapted) to the new situation. Electoral socialism, save at the local level, would not make a comeback on the pre-1920 model, in any hands. The need for alliances eventually led both Communists and most socialists (albeit as individuals) into New Deal, American Labor party, or (in Minnesota) Farmer-Labor party arrangements. The labor upsurge of the mid- and late 1930s that resumed in the latter days of World War II and ended only with the political division of CIO ranks also took place with "militant" leadership (Communist, socialist, Trotskyist, etc.) which rightly judged itself, at candid moments, as incapable of giving political education to the mass of workers. Leadership substituted for the autodidact's learning, displaced by commercial entertainment in an increasingly all-encompassing popular culture.<sup>20</sup>

Lore's reluctance to take political orders reinforced the paper's image as a renegade publication. His well-known personal fondness



for Trotsky led him to become the whipping boy during the party's offensive against language federation indiscipline (and proto-Trotskyist or feared proto-Trotskyist indiscipline) in general. In 1925, the party brought Lore up on charges in front of its German Language Federation board, and when the Germans refused to expel Lore, arranged for changes in the board to make his expulsion inevitable.<sup>21</sup>

The subsequent history of the NYVZ offers much food for thought. The German Language Federation indeed expelled Lore, but they thereby lost the NYVZ and nearly all of its supporters, i.e., whatever remained of German-American Marxism. The Communists attempted several weekly German-language papers. Each was unsuccessful. Not even a stream of newer German refugees could add life to this ghost-apparatus.<sup>22</sup>

The perspective of the writers in the Golden Jubilee 1928 NYVZ anniversary issue is most instructive. They charted the split with sections of the 1889 SLP, with DeLeon in 1899, and with the wartime Socialist party in 1919; the recent split with the Workers' (Communist) party shared the historical stage of political tragedy. In each case, the NYVZ had struggled *for its own existence* and for the correct balance in leadership of its constituency, neither too opportunistic or too sectarian. In one case, they had been persuaded and forced to leave an organization (the Socialist party) which had ceased to represent the working class; in the other three, they could not permit political hotheads, out of tune with American life and with immigrant radicalism, to destroy the NYVZ's hard-won institutional gains and unique standing with the German-American working class.<sup>23</sup>

To be sure, the tone of the NYVZ shifted, and not only politically. By the end of the 1920s, the NYVZ unquestionably lost some of its political tone, and became rather more of a "socialistic" labor and culture paper with a full page of wire-service photos and some other ostensibly nonpolitical matter like local radio listings. Lore's literary tastes, now completely unshackled, became more daring. Walt Whitman, André Gide, Boccaccio, and Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* now appeared in the weekly *Vorwärts*. News of Europe took on an avant-garde character, as in "Karl Kraus gegen Theodor Wolff: Eine kleine Berliner Sensation."<sup>24</sup>

On a purely political level, the paper urged support of Norman Thomas's socialist mayoral candidacy and spoke in such comradely terms as "Wir Sozialisten." Lore himself frankly wished for a choice somewhere between socialism and Communism, like Britain's Independent Labour party, although no such choice existed in America. He and the NYVZ shared political space, in that sense, with a number of prominent political refugees from American Communism, such as



J. B. S. Hardman, editor of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' important weekly paper, *Advance*. Lore sought, vainly—especially as the Communist movement passed into an ultrasectarian phase—to carve out a space in which activists of various backgrounds and generations could work with socialists, Communists, and others on specific projects, in the name of a larger labor-radical unity.<sup>25</sup>

For its own part, the paper maintained a remarkable equanimity. Indifference toward the curses of current American Communist leaders could be compartmentalized (as it often was by immigrants of all kinds) from negative conclusions about the Soviet Union, at least for a time. The Soviet Union, whatever its many faults, deserved defense. The Communist-oriented labor and fraternal institutions in the United States deserved support. At the level of the International Workers Order (formed by a split from the Jewish Workmen's Circle) and the International Labor Defense—both Communist-led but with a great deal of leeway and considerable benefits to the foreign-born community in particular—the NYVZ printed notices of meetings which even the expelled and deplored Lore himself continued to address! The Communists, in various phases, might to their own disadvantage move sharply away from such mixed milieux, then sharply back again. The NYVZ community knew where it stood.<sup>26</sup>

In any case, the institutions around the NYVZ continued to function past their Communist phase. The sickness-and-death-benefit societies, the singing societies, the German-based union locals, the "Deutsch-Amerikanischer Fussball-Bund," and the nature-walk societies might well have lost a handful of the more determined (or younger) comrades to the rigors of Leninism. But the institutions and the basic spirit continued, as embodied in the anniversary issues and in the *Pionier Volks-Kalender*, which had appeared for nearly a half-century. The Communists surely had lost more by far than they gained in limiting the loose arrangement.

The historical experience of the NYVZ, Lore noted, had been far from a steady advance, from victory to victory. The workers' movement of 1928, he lamented, was perhaps less well organized than that of 1898. But the task had been the same all along, whatever the political rhetoric: organization of all the working classes, no matter what their immediate affiliations, into one class-conscious mass. The NYVZ had kept the faith. And so—we must say too—it had.<sup>27</sup>



## NOTES

I wish to acknowledge the financial assistance, for research specifically in German-American sources, of the New Jersey Historical Commission and the American Council of Learned Societies; and the National Endowment for the Humanities, for its generous funding of oral history and research into immigrant radicalism. This essay reflects insights worked out in less detail in *Marxism in the United States*.

1. See, for example, the entry by Dirk Hoerder on the NYVZ and separate entries by Carol Poore on fraternal and social activities of nineteenth-century German-American socialists, in the *Encyclopedia of the American Left*. Also see Carol Poore, *German-American Socialist Literature*.

2. The new edition of *American Communism and Soviet Russia* seeks, like Draper's earlier attacks upon the most prominent of young radical historians of American Communism, to seal off precious scholarly turf. Ironically, we meant the old man no harm and indeed have paid frequent tribute to his hard research work and to his personal encouragement in his (and our) younger days. The "Commissar" (as Draper was known among his *New Masses* associates of the 1930s), victim of bad habits acquired long ago, has lost friends and scholarly credibility when he might otherwise have celebrated the new generation he helped bring into being.

3. Draper's generation of scholars—with the partial exception of Jewish historians working in Yiddish materials—essentially applied ideological generalities to particular cases, ignoring contradictory evidence. No more than William Z. Foster's *History of the Communist Party, USA* did Draper, or Lewis Coser and Irving Howe, or for that matter such younger scholars as James Weinstein, interest themselves particularly in subjecting broad generalities to closer scrutiny. See Foster's *History of the Communist Party, USA*, easily the worst of the accounts; and see the best of the farmer-labor episode, James Weinstein, *Decline of Socialism in America*. Among the many Yiddish-language scholars writing in English we can count Melech Epstein, Irving Howe, and Moses Rischin; among those in Yiddish, I. Sh. Hertz, Kalmon Marmor, A. Sh. Sacks, and a number of less-remembered students of anarchism and labor Zionism.

4. *Glimpses of the German-American Press*, which also contains an important essay on the Chicago socialist press by Renate Kiesewetter, is certainly the most important resource yet available in the field.

5. Some of this is drawn from my own attempt at a balanced account in *Marxism in the United States*; see also the unfavorable and not entirely inaccurate criticism of NYVZ insularity and high-handedness in the 1889 events, in Rudolph Katz, "With DeLeon since '89," the official DeLeonist, SLP account.

6. Ira Kipnis, a doctrinaire historian with little feeling for cultural questions, nevertheless offers the most detailed account of the splits and fusions in *American Socialist Movement*, chaps. 1–6.

7. Charles Leinenweber, "Urban Socialism."



8. See Poore, *German-American Socialist Literature*, and her accompanying German-language anthology of the writers, *Deutsch-amerikanische sozialistische Literatur*, for discussion of and samples from some of the writers named. On women's activities see Mari Jo Buhle, *Women and American Socialism*, and a valuable essay by Ruth Seifert, "Portrayal of Women in the German-American Labor Movement," drawing mostly on the NYVZ, 1901–3.

9. See Draper, *Roots of American Communism*, chap. 8, for an unsurpassed account of the politics and importance of *Revolutionary Age*.

10. See my account of this mentality in *Marxism in the United States*, chaps. 3–4.

11. Draper's lengthy treatment in *American Communism and Soviet Russia* is frequently insightful, but burdened by his own intellectual agenda, and by his lack of access to (or interest in) the non-English-language sources. I have excluded here Draper's treatment of Lore as faction-fighter in the 1920s Communist party because it does not bear directly upon the NYVZ and because Lore's intentions and motivations remain a mystery. Did he believe that he could intervene to help guide the party through troubling days that might pass? Evidently. His own role in the intrigues is, however, out of character, and many veterans of the day later admitted that the frenzy of internecine warfare turned idealism in upon itself.

12. See my interviews with Martin Birnbaum and Harvey O'Connor, in the Oral History of the American Left archives, Tamiment Library, New York University. I am grateful for the recollections of the late Yiddish poet Martin Birnbaum, who achieved his first publication in the mid-1920s NYVZ and who recalled to me the literary brilliance of the paper and of its editor. Birnbaum had been especially struck by the translation of the Yiddish humorist and essayist, Moshe Nadir, into German. Much of this interview was published as "Poetry in the 1930s," in *Cultural Correspondence*, #9 (1979). O'Connor, whose job was to collect overdue fees from the NYVZ to the Federated Press, regaled me about his meetings with Lore.

13. Editorial, "Debs und Steadman," NYVZ, May 22, 1920; Viktor Klotzman, "Aus unserem Leserkreise: Einigkeit—im Princip oder zum Schein," NYVZ, Apr. 23, 1920.

14. Editorial, "Debs und die Einigung aller Sozialismus," NYVZ, Apr. 24, 1923. Punctuation as in original [trans. eds.].

15. The introduction of an English-language section, made up mostly of Federated Press features, added a sort of Wobbly literary sensibility, closer to the IWW's contemporary *Industrial Pioneer* than to any existing Communist publication.

16. "Karoline Ott," NYVZ, May 2, 1920.

17. This subject has just been scrutinized by a group of young scholars. See the "Nature Friends" entry in *Encyclopedia of the American Left* and the collection of interviews in the Oral History of the American Left archives.

18. See Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia*, chap. 7, on "Bolshevization," which Draper unfortunately fails to connect with Lore and the



NYVZ; Gustav Landauer, "Briefe aus der deutschen Revolution," NYVZ, Dec. 16, 1923; "The Workers Party und die Mittelklasse," NYVZ, Jan. 17, 1924; "National Konvention der Deutschen Sprachgruppe," NYVZ, Nov. 30 and Dec. 6, 1924.

19. Best seen retrospectively in Lore, "Nach fünfzig Jahren," NYVZ, Nov. 29, 1928.

20. Editorial, "Sozialisten sein—oder nicht sein, das ist die Frage," NYVZ, Dec. 5, 1924.

21. At this point, historiographically speaking, Lore and the NYVZ disappear from *American Communism and Soviet Russia*. One would not know that the NYVZ continued as an independent socialist daily until 1932, and (amid the rapidly advancing old age of its constituents) managed to appear weekly until 1944, when the hated Nazis had at last been defeated. Draper, of course, did not write a history of the American left but of American Communism and not so much of American Communism as of its leaders. Some account of Lore, the NYVZ, and its successor, the *Neue Volkszeitung*, can be found in Robert E. Cazden, *German Exile Literature in America*. See also Joachim Radkau, *Deutsche Emigration*.

22. Interview with Martin Birnbaum. See Cazden, *German Exile Literature in America*, and Cazden, "Bibliography of German-American Communist Newspapers."

23. Lore, "Nach fünfzig Jahren."

24. "Karl Kraus gegen Theodor Wolff," NYVZ, Nov. 23, 1929; see also, for example, "Aus der Arbeiterbewegung," NYVZ, Nov. 19, 1928; "Deutsch-Amerikanischer Fussball-Bund," NYVZ, Nov. 20, 1928. *Pionier Volks-Kalender* advertisements continued during the latter part of each year for next year's calendar, marked with traditional workers' holidays, birthdays of great heroes (like saints' days), and essays on various subjects.

25. Editorial, "Vom Tage," NYVZ, Nov. 27, 1929. I examine the yearning for a third, noncommunist, and nonsocialist force in some detail in my dissertation, "Marxism in the US," chaps. 3–4.

26. Editorial, "Eine neue Welle des roten Terrors," NYVZ, Oct. 30, 1929. The United Front styles are abundant in this period.

27. Lore, "Nach fünfzig Jahren."



## The German-American Labor Press and Its Views of the Political Institutions in the United States

This essay will survey the development of the German-American labor press from the 1840s to the 1940s, analyze its opinions about U.S. political institutions in the 1880s, and detail the experience of one editor, who worked in America from 1910 to 1923, to illuminate the everyday problems of labor journalists. The term "labor press" includes all union periodicals, social democratic, socialist, anarchist, and communist papers, local and regional labor papers, and publications of workers clubs, whether in newspaper or magazine format. The first identifiable German-American labor periodicals appear in the 1840s, publications of the utopian socialists. Unlike the thinking of some nineteenth-century British unions, no German-language periodicals seem to have advocated a return of skilled workers or miners to agrarian pursuits. And unlike the concepts of some American groups, embodied for a time in the ideology of the Knights of Labor, no explicit producer ideology seems to have existed among German labor migrants in the 1880s and after, though from the 1840s to the 1870s it was advocated in Weitling's *Republik der Arbeiter* and by pro-labor radical democratic 48er journalists. The German-American labor press did not link the struggle of workers to that of small farmers, little shopkeepers, and the like—to those groups in the social hierarchy which are sometimes called the lower middle class, sometimes the independent proletariat. In the case of migrants from eastern and southern Europe, there was only a small middle-class migration—a few 48ers, farmers, priests, journalists, and entrepreneurs. Thus their middle-class publications, whether religious or nationalist, had to accommodate their views to a working-class readership (though this does not imply that



the writers took a class position). The German community, on the other hand, was sufficiently heterogeneous that different audiences could be and were addressed.<sup>1</sup> Connections between the German middle-class and labor press appeared briefly when some disenchanted 48ers turned to more radical viewpoints and then reappeared eighty years later when refugees from Nazi Germany came to the United States.

It should also be noted here that the classification of German migrants as belonging to the "old immigration" is misleading: the "old"- "new" dichotomy between immigrants from western and northern Europe and those from southern and eastern Europe was introduced with racist overtones. It implied that the former became farmers, the latter workers, and assumed the changeover to have occurred in the late 1880s. However, Germans and Scandinavians continued to migrate in large numbers in the first half of the 1890s and most of them were skilled or unskilled workers. On the other hand, Eastern Europeans had come since the 1840s and included farmers. In this essay I distinguish between settlement (agrarian) and labor (urban) migration instead.

### The German-Language Labor Press: A Survey

The development of the German-American labor press is closely related to early labor migration from the 1840s and to the massive out-migration of the period from 1879 to 1893.<sup>2</sup> Three groups of political refugees played a particularly important role among the editors and journalists: the refugees of the failed revolution of 1848-49, the socialists and anarchists expelled between 1878 and 1890 under the antisocialist law, and the émigré opponents of Nazi rule between 1933 and 1945. Though the political emigrants were numerically insignificant when compared to the whole of German settlement and labor migration, they took a decisive role in the development of the labor press as particularly outspoken members of the community. The 48ers and early socialists gave a distinct appearance to Phase I of the labor and radical press (1844-69). Socialist, anarchist, and union publications marked Phase 2 (1870-1902). Phase 3 (1903-29) was characterized by a consolidation of the existing press but also by a decline of new ideas and new periodicals. A final phase (1930-45) represented a different radical press: antifascist and antiwar. Much of it was not labor-oriented. Since its early beginnings this press was concentrated in areas that were to remain the centers of labor and left German publishing activities in North America: in the north, Sheboygan, Wisconsin, Detroit, Toronto, Syracuse, and Boston marked the borders. In the



south it ran from Baltimore along the southern border of Pennsylvania and the Ohio River to St. Louis, and in the west from St. Louis via Davenport to Milwaukee. Publishing outposts were New Orleans, San Antonio and Hallettsville in Texas, San Francisco, Omaha and Kansas City, as well as Winnipeg and Edmonton in Canada.<sup>3</sup>

The *formative period* of the labor press from the 1840s to the 1860s included publications of radical artisans, 48ers and their predecessors, of the first Marxists arriving in the United States, and of a number of local workingmen's organizations. Active participation of many of them in the Civil War resulted in a decrease of periodical publications during the 1860s. While classification is always to some degree arbitrary, the more than sixty periodicals first published during these years may be divided into the press of 48ers and freethinkers sympathetic to labor, of advocates of early or utopian socialism, and of middle-class reformers addressing workers (twenty-three titles). Sixteen titles were issued by local workers' clubs, twenty-four advocated social democratic, socialist,<sup>4</sup> and general labor principles. Many of these periodicals were relatively short-lived.

Phase 2, from the 1870s to the turn of the century, was the *dynamic period* of the German-American labor press. The influence of early socialism and utopian communism had come to an end. Workers' clubs on a citywide basis were replaced by organizations of more continuity and broader influence. Socialist ideas began to play a larger role, a development that reached other immigrant groups only later. Economic growth and recessions, labor's organizational achievements as well as its increased exploitation, and the influx of labor migrants from Germany contributed to the burgeoning of the labor press. Political exiles under the antisocialist law provided capable editors. While contemporaries and those historians limiting themselves to political theory and labor organization have criticized the sectarianism of the German-American socialists, a reading of the major German-language labor newspapers reveals their strong predisposition to come to terms with the new society. Nevertheless some political exiles continued to look back and hope for a return, and considerable energies of German-American socialists were directed to the support of the embattled German Social Democratic party in the 1880s and into the 1890s.<sup>5</sup> Some leaders of the Socialist Labor party did engage in dogmatic debates followed by party splits, but most socialists noted that in the new society experience was the best teacher.

Accordingly the German-American socialist and workers' movement had integrated into the English-language mainstream labor



movement or into the English-speaking socialist parties by about 1900.<sup>6</sup> Of the more than 120 periodicals established during Phase 2, only one was a socialist Turner paper and one a free-thought periodical. Local and general labor periodicals accounted for seventeen titles, socialist, Workingmen's party, and Socialist Labor party publications for thirty-seven. When (modest) election successes were stolen from socialist candidates and when class war was propagated from the top down in the wake of the 1877 national railroad strike, anarchist thought temporarily gained influence (twenty-one titles). The social democratic, municipal socialism, and Socialist party press also made its debut (seven titles). Throughout the period trade-union periodicals (thirty titles) achieved impact and continuity. The average duration of publication for each new title was—with the exception of most of the anarchist press—considerably longer than in the formative period.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to the variety and number of publications, the most significant achievement of Phase 2 was the establishment of a "core press": twenty-one periodicals, founded mainly in the 1870s and 1880s, which lasted for more than twenty years. By total years of publication, the core press accounted for about half of the periodicals available during this phase, for about three-quarters in Phase 3 (1903–29), and for about one-third in Phase 4 (1930–45). It represented the whole spectrum of the German-American labor press from free-thought, Turner, and anarchist to union, social democratic, and socialist publications. The periodicals lasting less than twenty years show the vivacity of German-American reform, labor, and left movements, reflect remnants of the personal journalism of the 1840s and 1850s as well as doctrinal differentiation, and reflect the many courageous attempts to establish periodicals in smaller towns. The core of the labor movement is represented by the long-lived periodicals.

Phase 3 from 1903 to the beginning of the Great Depression was a period of limited continuity but also of stagnation and decline. The core press and several other publications continued into this period, but a dramatic decline in the founding of new periodicals is registered as well as a decline in total numbers of periodicals published. This development has its roots in the 1890s, when the influx of new migrants ended, as the German-American labor movement passed its apogee as an ethnic movement and began to integrate into the English-language multiethnic organizations. Until 1929 only sixteen new labor periodicals were founded, including one Catholic labor-union paper, a syndicalist-oriented one, and a Communist party paper. This accentuated the fact that German-American workers—by now often second



generation—had acculturated and were underrepresented among unskilled workers. The geographical expansion of places of publication noted for Phase 2 is replaced by a sharp contraction.

Only two additions to the core press are registered for these three decades. Both emphasized cultural and recreational aspects of the movement. Several periodicals were organs of ethnically based mutual benefit organizations that still fulfilled an economic, social, and recreational function. World War I further reduced the number of labor periodicals, capping a trend of a decade and a half.

During the last phase of German-American publishing, from the Depression through World War II, the core press declined to seven publications by 1930 and to one by 1945. The periodicals of the early 1930s marked the brief emergence of a Canadian-German labor movement, while in the United States the labor press restricted itself to reports on working-class culture in the German-American ethnic group. The appearance of the *Kampfsignal* marked the transition from cultural periodicals on the left to antifascist publications. From that period, German-American social democratic, socialist, Communist, and non-aligned left periodicals opposed Nazi ideology and dictatorship and became fundamentally different in character from the earlier immigrant labor press. They were joined in this struggle by many publications of non-working-class intellectuals.

While earlier a tendency to partial publication in English was observable, these new periodicals were published exclusively in German, addressing themselves to other exiles in North America or Europe as well as to the German resistance movement. After 1941 many publications were concerned intensively with plans for a postwar Germany.

After the war, a few German-language and left periodicals continued to be published or were newly established. They remained marginal and provided a somewhat undistinguished ending for a once important element of the North American ethnic labor press. In the century from the 1840s to the 1940s about 250 labor periodicals appeared (of a total of about five thousand German-language periodicals). Only the Jewish and the Italian labor presses were similarly significant in numbers, the latter, because of a large number of ephemeral anarchist publications, had less impact.<sup>8</sup>

### The Labor Press Views "Democratic" Society

The view German immigrants held of the new society varied greatly according to their social position. The letters of settlers in the



first half of the nineteenth century generally show people content with having left behind the arrogance of German officials, with escaping the swarms of tax, tithe, and other collectors. Artisans emphasized that when asking for a job they did not have to cringe, they did not even have to take their caps off. The letters included references to the quick work pace, to problems with "strange" farming methods, to difficulties in gaining a foothold in commerce, but the basic theme was: by hard work any individual can make his or her own way.<sup>9</sup> This positive image was grafted onto an earlier positive view dating from the "age of bourgeois-democratic revolution" when the new American state became the model for many reformers and revolutionaries in Europe<sup>10</sup> and has taken deep root in historians' studies as well.

This view of the American experience totally neglects the condition into which labor migrants were cast and which determined their opinion of the new society. Several authors have recently pointed out that by the 1880s, letters from workers to their families and villages painted a very realistic image of "oppression," that is, exploitation, in America.<sup>11</sup> A reading of the labor press in many European countries shows that workers could adequately gauge their chances—or the lack of them—from the regular reporting about conditions in America: social and economic differences were as large as in Europe. This is being conceded—if somewhat reluctantly—by economists and some historians.<sup>12</sup> It is worth noting that the highly critical attitude of organized labor toward conditions in the United States was shared by German diplomats looking from the top down. Rarely did they see anything positive in turn-of-the-century America, in fact many called the United States a country where money ruled, a plutocracy.<sup>13</sup>

The initial hypothesis for my research was that German out-migrants assumed that in the United States, the job and destination conditions would be better, if only slightly. It was assumed that the constant police presence at workers' meetings in Germany under the antisocialist law created a feeling of totalitarian surveillance, while the aid given by ward heelers of the Democratic—and more rarely of the Republican—party created a feeling of having at least extra-institutional access to some benefits of the system. For the top level the hypothesis assumed limited paternalism in Germany—social security legislation—and intolerant rejection of all of labor's demands in the United States as evidenced in the judgments handed down by the Supreme Court and other higher courts in all matters of labor legislation and labor struggles. A detailed reading of the *New Yorker Volkszeitung* (NYVZ) proved the first part of the hypothesis wrong. A



detailed reading of Supreme Court opinions revealed a more deep-seated and more openly espoused class consciousness by the majority of the judges than expected.

"Amerika ist kein neues Land mehr," the *NYVZ* complained in 1881. Statistics, often provided by the state bureaus of labor, were marshaled to show the low standard of living which workers had to accept and the high degree of exploitation to which they were subjected. Working conditions differed little from those in Germany. Violence exerted by the monopolies against strikers was worse than the policeman's club in Germany; corruption was worse than in Czarist Russia; the work pace was faster than in Great Britain.<sup>14</sup> Democratic and republican ideals were but a veil to hide the reality of wage slavery. Adolf Douai quoted the former governor and senator from New York, William H. Seward: "The entire difference between you (the slaveholders) and us (the free-soil people) is that you own your workers, and we rent them." Wage slavery became the dominant theme and from this it is obvious that workers would not experience the new world turned old as a testing ground for republican ideals, a beacon of liberty.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, when the Statue of Liberty was dedicated in October 1886, a gift of the French people in memory of the centennial of the Declaration of Independence, the *NYVZ* noted: "Freedom's Symbol. Unveiled by the Rich and the Aristocrats. The Wage Slaves are Allowed to Stand By." The "rich" and the "aristocrats" were described in the text as idlers, exploiters, a hypocritical bourgeoisie "living in luxury screaming hurrah according to their understanding of freedom."<sup>16</sup>

Workers had different experiences with liberty. Few of them shared in the benefits distributed by ward heelers, more came in contact with the ever-present police. The days of the revolutionary period were gone—when a few constables had looked after the proper conduct of the people; when the people rioted to bring back into the fold the wealthy, i.e., the merchants, the powerful, the few officials who had overstepped the norms set by community standards. Half a century later the Boston police, faced with an increasing number of indigent and unemployed, had opened soup kitchens on their own initiative. A full century later the police forces in American cities had been transformed into instruments of one class, the higher bourgeoisie, to suppress another class, the workers, with the lower bourgeoisie left in the middle, sometimes siding with workers, particularly in smaller towns where a feeling of community was preserved, sometimes siding with the higher-ranking people, usually in the larger towns. After the railroad workers' uprising in 1877, the police were reinforced by the heavily armed National Guard, an army to quell internal uprisings. In



addition there were several private police and paramilitary organizations, like the Pinkertons and the coal and steel police.<sup>17</sup> Many historians of migration specializing in the cultures of origin find little difference between repression in the Czarist, Habsburg, or Prussian empires and in the United States. While no detailed comparative studies have yet been undertaken, the impression prevails that the savage police attack on the unemployed in New York's Tompkins Square in 1874 may be comparable to European police violence, while incidents on the scale of the Ludlow massacre have no counterparts in European relations between industry or government and labor. Kaiser Wilhelm II's dictum that social democrats were "vaterlandslose Gesellen" found its parallel in the persecution of socialists from Haymarket to the Red Scare, as Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer and other prosecutors labeled radicals as "un-American," as "seditious aliens."<sup>18</sup>

An analysis of the NYVZ's reporting of New York police activities between 1886 and 1892 shows that at least for the readers of this paper it was common knowledge that the police were corrupt (the personal property of police officers was contrasted with their official pay), brutal in everyday affairs (attacks on citizens with no class motivation), and partisan (siding with capital during strikes).<sup>19</sup> In the latter case the NYVZ called the officers "Bestie Polizist," "offizielle Rowdies," "Banditen der Kapitalmacht." Police Inspector McKellar was quoted as having said, "You god-damned socialists are reponsible for all this turmoil. . . . The best thing to do would be to smash all your skulls."<sup>20</sup> It might be said that from the viewpoint of workers two kinds of criminals existed, those operating privately for their personal gain and those paid by government (or in some cases industry) and operating for both their private gain and to preserve the class society.

Can the reporting of the NYVZ be considered to yield a realistic picture of police activities? Few of its charges were taken up by the English-language press of New York. The foreign-language press was not read by the hegemonic society, the grievances of the immigrants not taken seriously. On the other hand, police brutality did annoy native English speakers and criticism of it can be found in English-language papers.<sup>21</sup> In 1894, the official "Lexow Committee" substantiated almost all the charges that the NYVZ had raised against the police since they began publishing in 1878, with the exception, of course, of the paper's position on the class struggle. A comparison of the reporting of the NYVZ with that of the *New York Times* demonstrates that both sides accepted the role of the police as a mainstay of middle-class power and politics. Police clubs are used with "alacrity," strikers are lectured by mayors to subdue their pride, or, directly to the point:



"The law-abiding people of the United States will regret, not that three or four of the Scranton rioters were killed, but that the rifles of the volunteer company charged with the protection of property did not do more execution."<sup>22</sup>

Moving from the level of lawlessness in law enforcement—from Wickersham—to the attitude of the NYVZ to the political system as a whole, the viewpoint was equally clear. President Garfield's inauguration was decribed as "Carneval des Grosskapitalismus."<sup>23</sup> Legislation applying "criminal conspiracy laws" to workers' organizations met with harsh criticism and was called class legislation in the interests of one class, a class that was variously called bourgeois, money lords, capitalist, or the moneyed aristocracy.<sup>24</sup> Historians hostile to the concept of class as a category for analyzing society might charge that such statements were overblown rhetoric. At the other end of the spectrum, though, the Supreme Court judges in commencement speeches and court opinions talked about the war between classes (as the previous war had been one between sections) and saw it as their role to oppose the "march of the 60 million" toward a more equal distribution of property and opportunity.<sup>25</sup> Class rhetoric may not have been as common as in Europe and probably boundaries between classes were less rigid, but class consciousness was voiced from many sections of the population, it was not a foreign import. The Knights of Labor developed their class analysis from an analysis of labor's position in American society, while the Supreme Court in the Income Tax cases followed bourgeois ideology, particularly the interests of large capital, when using the concept of class war.

To combat this tendency, the German immigrants as well as those of different ethnic backgrounds fused their social democratic thought with the social republicanism of American workers as expressed by the Knights of Labor and striking workers. They referred to an internationally recognized body of thought about equal rights stemming both from the American Declaration of Independence and from the French Revolution. In an article entitled "Why Continue to Celebrate the Fourth of July?" published in 1881, the NYVZ emphasized that it was a great achievement for the American Revolution to have demanded independence by declaring that "all humans are born with equal rights" ("dass alle Menschen gleiche angeborene Rechte haben") and that a people has the right to change its constitution and its government, when these violate the principle of equality and of the Bill of Rights ("dass ein Volk das Recht habe, seine Verfassung und Regierung zu wechseln, wenn diese die gleichen Menschenrechte ver-



letze"). Such principles, however, had become a thing of the past. The wealthy descendants of the republic, whom Andrew Carnegie proudly called an aristocracy of the dollar, liked to stay in Europe and to marry into aristocracy. There, workers also observed a turnaround in class norms. Hungarian, German, Slovak, and other workers in Budapest witnessed the arrival of marriage candidates and ridiculed the socially exclusive aristocrats who forgot all distinctions of rank when rich American citizens came to their doors.

While historians and sociologists have emphasized the difference between feudal and bourgeois upper classes, workers at the turn of the century witnessed an aristocracy and a capitalist class merge into each other through marriage and capital transfer. This whole class was, as native and immigrant workers in the United States bitterly charged, no longer responsible to the laws. It imported wage slaves from all over the world and bribed the legislatures and civil servants. Immigrant upstarts like the (German-American) brewery bosses emulated the American top class: modern dukes and small despots; the railroad magnates conducted themselves like the old European powers. Nevertheless the *NYVZ* did not recommend abolishing the Fourth of July. Rather it demanded a return to first principles. Those who fought for independence from Great Britain in 1776 had vowed to fight for it or to perish; they did not want to live as slaves. Now the struggle had to go on: free men had been turned into wage slaves by the dominance of a capitalist class which had turned the American republic into a modern sort of feudalism.<sup>26</sup>

Having outlined the criticism of the political (and economic) system of the United States as voiced in the *NYVZ*, which as part of the core press can be taken as representing a cross section of opinions of socialist-oriented workers, we should now ask, what chances for an improvement did the workers see? Apart from a brief period when election frauds stole success at the polls from many socialist candidates in municipal elections and when in consequence a substantial section of the politically active German-American workers turned to anarchism and to armed resistance against police and Pinkerton violence, the German-American socialists shared the liberal-republican tradition stemming from the American and French revolutionary heritage, as Hartmut Keil has pointed out.<sup>27</sup> While some socialist thinkers debated American society in terms of a strict Marxist analysis, the vast majority of the socialists decided to use accepted institutional channels to promote their view of social republicanism:<sup>28</sup> the polls and the unions. The struggle for a different economic system in the future receded against



short-term gains. Their efforts yielded only limited results: workingmen's parties and municipal socialism did gain a foothold in many cities but not on a nationwide scale.

The hopes for victory at the polls were diminished not only by the limited voter response but also by massive election frauds and by reactionary Supreme Court rulings that declared unconstitutional any legislative gains labor made. The socialists and some committed liberals had to realize, as did the Knights of Labor earlier, that they were the only ones in the system who took democratic rules seriously. This certainly contributed to the bitterness of their rhetoric, and it also led some activists to withdraw or to view the system with cynicism. I have argued elsewhere that, given the high incidence of migration, notwithstanding warnings from disillusioned immigrants and all of the accurate information available to those who still chose to come, and given bitter experiences in the United States, migration was not a move toward a better society but rather an attempt to take one's future out of the hands of "fate," out of a predetermined course in the old country, into one's own hands. Kerby Miller has put forward a similar argument for Irish migrants.<sup>29</sup> Migration became a secular religion: a determination not to wait for a better life after death, not to wait for the results of class struggle leading to better conditions in one's society of birth, but rather to move away, i.e., to an industrializing area in Europe, North America, or elsewhere in the world, to realize limited improvements in personal conditions, and if necessary continue the struggle for societal improvement there. Moving off when conditions became intolerable gave many migrants, according to their own accounts, a feeling of independence, of dignity. If power relationships prevented any fighting back, out-migration was the last resort to show discontent.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, if power relationships in a "democratic" society could nullify election successes, a move to anarchism or a withdrawal into cynical contempt for the new society was a logical response. Those who continued the struggle had more and more difficulty explaining to themselves and their followers why they should harbor any hopes for an improvement in conditions, as the columns of the German-American labor press show.

### Case Study of a Labor Editor<sup>31</sup>

Josef Jodlbauer, social democratic deputy in the Diet (Landtag) of Styria, Austria, migrated to the United States in 1910. His reasons were personal: a broken marriage and a child with his new compan-



ion. He did not go toward something better, he left rigid and confining social norms.

He harbored no illusions about the new society, as he made clear in his autobiography; he merely saw a chance to earn a living and to remain active in the movement. But he soon had to realize that even a person as well informed about the new society as he was did harbor illusions. The persecution of all those who did not subscribe to the capitalist system and its parliamentary and police branches forced him to return to Austria in 1923. His illusions, his hopes, and his struggles may be taken as representing the experience of many activists who aspired to change, to improve the system from within, who did not believe the official rhetoric about the rights and the rule of the people but who attempted to use those rights the laws gave them.

On arrival, passing the Statue of Liberty, he felt the symbol misplaced: he knew all the details about the Haywood, Moyer, Pettibone trial, which definitely did not square with any concept of liberty. His only reason to absolve the American people from hypocrisy was the fact that the statue had been a gift of the French people and had not been erected by the American people themselves. "In less than fifty years it has become very dilapidated through rust. But it is not yet as brittle as what the Americans call freedom!" (p. 14).

Looking for a job, he visited the office of the NYVZ and found the staff—in 1910—somewhat superannuated. Viewed from Europe, socialism in the United States seemed to be a factor of some influence ("beachtenswert"), and he wrongly assumed that this was the reason why the First International's central office had been transferred to Philadelphia in 1870. Though it came to a quick demise, Jodlbauer had his own positive image of the past: in the 1870s more than twenty dailies claiming to follow socialist principles had been published in the United States. This had been a time when nobody could even have thought of publishing a truly socialist paper in Austria. In addition, more than one million workers in the United States were organized in unions, and their strikes aroused interest all over the world (pp. 19–20).

Disappointed with the NYVZ, he began to look halfheartedly for a job in his trade as a baker or in any other manual employment, but his hopes to continue working as an editor remained unabated. The editors of the NYVZ bypassed him whenever there was an opening. Jodlbauer assumed that they hired Germans only, no Austrians. A position at the *Philadelphia Tageblatt* was not suited to his capabilities and he did not consider the *Tageblatt* a socialist paper. In addition, working con-



ditions were miserable. A lucrative offer to change sides and join the staff of the Hearst-owned *New York Journal* meant "unlimited opportunities" and agreeable working conditions, but, unwilling to sell out his principles, he turned it down (pp. 26–30).

Finally he began to work as a "master mechanic" at the Singer sewing machine factory in Elizabeth, New Jersey. For a brief time he wrote articles for the *NYVZ*, but soon realized that imported notions of socialism did not fit the situation of American workers. He decided to study statistical and background materials about the United States, and as a result his lectures were well attended (pp. 40–41). When he attempted to discuss social security legislation with workers of his factory, he was well aware that under section 23 of the Austrian press law this might have led to arrest; trusting the doctrine of freedom of press, speech, and assembly in the United States, he went ahead, and was summarily arrested and sentenced for littering the street with handbills. So much for the laws and the Bill of Rights.

When it was suggested that he tour the country to agitate for socialism, he felt that the conservative wing of the party merely wanted to have him out of town—he was now working in New York City—but accepted the proposition because a prospective editor (his hope!) of a major German-American labor periodical should know more of the new country than downstate New York and the surrounding areas (p. 59). He was lecturing in New England when the textile workers' strike of 1912 began and experienced the "terrorism" against strikers, worse than anything he had ever witnessed in Austria (p. 64). Citizens of the most free and democratic country of the world armed against workers; public institutions used the whole repressive apparatus established since the 1880s to mistreat the immigrants in every way possible (pp. 64, 111–12).

In 1912 he became editor of the *Cleveland Echo*, a socialist weekly started in 1911 but financially ruined by the beginning of 1912. Jodlbauer succeeded in reestablishing a sound basis for the paper, became secretary of Local 19 of the Bakers' Union, and reported as critically about the machinations of the union's leadership as about the country's political leadership. His position as editor was difficult, because he was Austrian, not German; because his opinions not only conflicted with the middle-class press but were also voiced rather uncompromisingly; because in many cases larger periodicals had faster access to information while he had merely the background knowledge to interpret the materials. Jodlbauer threw a little light on the composition of the German-language ethnic community: one side was made up of older immigrants from Germany, assimilated and middle-class



oriented ("verbürgerlicht"); the other part consisted of recent arrivals, mainly proletarians from Austria, Hungary, the Baltic areas, even from Syria "and from God only knows where." The established section of the ethnic community played a self-assumed leadership role, but in Jodlbauer's opinion it was nothing but the tail end of the Democratic or Republican parties. To reach all groups of new arrivals, he had to limit his writing style to a "basic German," consisting of no more than a few hundred words. As long as he did not touch on questions of broad interest, his work as editor received little notice beyond that of the readership. He was placed in the limelight or rather on the pillory when he deviated from accepted majority opinion in emotionally charged situations. For example, when the "Titanic" sank, he noted that probably it was not the iceberg that should be faulted but the White Star Line's demand for speed. Angry readers and other members of the German ethnic community besieged him, pointed out that he was no German anyway but a "Pollack," and asked repentance for exposing the German-American community to the hostility of the new society. When an Italian-language paper supported his argument, the ethnic slur was changed, he now was called "Spagettifritzi" (pp. 72-74, 76).

The next problem arose when two policemen were killed on duty while looking for "suspicious foreigners" ("verdächtige Ausländer"). The incident was used to begin a broad anti-alien campaign to arouse class hatred among all bourgeois groups, regardless of ethnicity, against all impoverished foreigners. While he supported a decent pension for the families of the two policemen, he opposed a public burial, arguing that the incident was a work accident ("Betriebsunfall") like thousands of others and that efforts should be made to procure support for all victims of work accidents. He used the example of a number of workers who had been killed when enlarging the waterworks in Lake Erie and whose families had received no support. "Why do we say we live in a country of equality, when such differences are maintained?" he asked (pp. 78-79). Even the (socialist) administrative board of the paper felt that this was going too far. When a former AFL official admitted having been an employers' agent, Jodlbauer was told in advance by union officials, knowing his outspoken manners, to keep quiet. As might be assumed, he did not heed the advice. He knew corruption and double-dealing when he saw it (pp. 102-3).

His demands for equality went far—even from the perspective of his contemporaries including his socialist comrades. When Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo, Jodlbauer merely noted that socialists definitely did not support the death penalty, but that by Aus-



trian law people used to be hanged for lesser crimes. On the question of war, socialists were split into class-conscious and patriotic groups. Jodlbauer, belonging to the former, decided to remain somewhat aloof from the *Cleveland Echo* because otherwise the factional struggles would cause the periodical to fail. His deep mistrust of the American democratic system led him to propose organizing the Socialist party, of which he was the German Ohio state organizer, into groups of ten, which could operate secretly should the government use the war situation to institute severely repressive measures. His suggestion was rejected as coming from someone who grew up in the Austrian police state (pp. 124, 192). The repressive measures of the government in the winter of 1919–20 justified his suspicions. The continuous harassment, the antiradical campaigns which to Jodlbauer were always anti-alien campaigns, and the brutality of the police, Chamber of Commerce vigilantes and other thugs, and officials of the Department of Justice (as described in the autobiography) seemed to be different only in degree from earlier Russian pogroms and the later SA-terror. Jodlbauer ascribed the political success of the government and the capitalist class over their workers to a policy of divide and conquer, of bread and circuses. The workers had been made to believe by the government, the press, and the AFL unions that they had no distinct political interests of their own. It was merely accepted that workers would have their own support organizations for illness and death. Since they were admittedly less well off than others in the United States and since no one else paid their bills for doctors, medication, and burial, it was the advantage a free worker had to be self-sufficient in these respects. Still following Jodlbauer's argument, all efforts to unionize workers had been imported in the cultural baggage of migrant laborers, but the American organizations were turned into craft unions that were closer to medieval guilds than to modern labor unions (p. 188).<sup>32</sup> Anyone who did not accept fate, who did not mindlessly accept whatever the ruling circles decided, was designated a "radical," thus becoming an outlaw, no longer a part of the community. Any kind of violence and terror could be used against the "radical." The imprisonment of Eugene Debs in 1918 on charges of sedition; a policeman's attack on Jodlbauer's pregnant wife; the burning of the Socialist party files; and hundreds of other incidents served to confirm his notion of America.

By 1923, at the age of forty-six, the difficulty of securing a job—his radical opinions were well known—and the constant threats to his life (including those from union thugs), as well as internal splits among the U.S. left, and despair over the possibility for change in the United States, prompted his to return to Europe. His rationale was



that of the quintessential labor migrant: we will find something better than death. On the other hand, his wife provided a rationale similar to the labor migrants who decided to stay: she had gotten used to new surroundings and new friends (pp. 268ff.).

Judging from his autobiography, Jodlbauer was no revolutionary. He and the labor press in general never counseled one-sided reliance on the ballot but with few exceptions remained within the framework set by the Constitution, the laws, and very importantly the Declaration of Independence. Like many of its immigrant workers' readership, the labor press took the liberty of condemning some means of exploitation and some governmental measures as inconsistent with the "first principles" of the American people.

Jodlbauer, like many of the German-American labor editors, had considerable difficulty reaching middle-class German immigrants. This press remained class-based, with ethnicity relegated to the second rank. The *Echo* reflected the experience of those labor migrants among the German-Americans who came during the period of the so-called new immigration. In fact, a part of its "German" readership came from areas eastward of the German national territories in Europe. The *Echo* is a typical example of the German-American labor press surveyed above, since it was neither one of the short-lived radical or local publications nor part of the core press. It provided information and critical comments about American political institutions on a sophisticated level, a sophistication shared by many activists of the German-American labor movement. Its pragmatism and strong emphasis on U.S. unions and socialist parties also made clear that German-American workers had become part of the American labor movement.

## NOTES

1. The standard bibliography for the German-American press is Karl J. R. Arndt and May E. Olson, *Deutsch-amerikanische Zeitungen und Zeitschriften*; for the German-American labor press see Anne Spier, "Germans." For the labor press of other ethnic groups see Christiane Harzig and Dirk Hoerder, eds., *Press of Labor Migrants*.

2. The periodization has been developed on the basis of research done by Anne Spier.

3. Anne Spier, "Germans," fig. 3.

4. This category includes periodicals with free-thought tendencies or affiliation with the Turners or the International Workingmen's Association.

5. Dirk Hoerder and Hartmut Keil, "American Case and German Social Democracy."

6. This was demonstrated by both the research project "A Social History



of the German Workers of Chicago, 1850–1910" (Universität München, Hartmut Keil and John B. Jentz, directors) and the "Labor Newspaper Project" (Universität Bremen, Dirk Hoerder, director).

7. See table, "Length of Publication," in Dirk Hoerder, "The Press of Labor Migrants from Western and Central Europe: Introduction," p. 218.

8. Ida C. Selavan, "Jews," and Annamaria Tasca, "Italians."

9. "Amerika ist ein freies Land."

10. Günter Moltmann, *Atlantische Blockpolitik im 19. Jahrhundert; American and European Revolutions; Impact of the American Revolution Abroad*. A less well researched "plebeian" or "Jacobin" tradition developed from the French Revolution.

11. John H. M. Laslett, "America before and after Emigration"; Lars-Goeran Tedebrand, "Image of America among Swedish Labor Migrants."

12. Jeffrey Williamson and Peter Lindert, *American Inequality*; Hartmut Kaelble, *Historical Research on Social Mobility*; Peter R. Shergold, *Working-Class Life*.

13. "Plutokraten und Sozialisten."

14. NYVZ, Feb. 14, 20, July 1, 1881, May 6, 24, 1887.

15. NYVZ, Jan. 28, 1888.

16. NYVZ, Oct. 29, 1886, quoted in Hartmut Keil, "Ambivalent Identity."

17. Dirk Hoerder, "'Mobs, a Sort of Them at Least, Are Constitutional'"; Joseph J. Holmes, "National Guard of Pennsylvania"; Jeremiah P. Shalloo, *Private Police*; Sidney L. Harring, *Policing a Class Society*.

18. This idea has been debated by scholars cooperating in the Labor Migration Project at the University of Bremen. Studies of the Russian labor movement by U.S. scholars confirm this impression. The German-language social democratic newspaper *Volkstimme* published in Budapest between 1894 and 1924 does indicate a comparable level of repressive violence as well as a higher level of gendarme brutality against the rural population.

19. Thomas Weber, "Berichterstattung der 'New Yorker Volkszeitung.'"

20. NYVZ, Apr. 24, 1886.

21. James F. Richardson, *New York Police*, p. 193.

22. *New York Times*, Aug. 2, 1877.

23. NYVZ, Mar. 2, 1881.

24. NYVZ, Mar. 4, 1882.

25. Income Tax cases, expression used by Joseph H. Choate, counsel for plaintiff, accepted by judges; quoted in Louis B. Boudin, *Government by Judiciary*, 2 vols. (New York, 1932), 2:219, 223–33.

26. NYVZ, July 4, 1881.

27. Keil, "Ambivalent Identity," cf. n. 16.

28. Paul Krause, "Labor Republicanism and 'Za Chlebom'"; Richard Schneirov and John B. Jentz, "Social Republicanism and Socialism."

29. Dirk Hoerder, "German Immigrant Workers' Views of 'America'"; Kerby A. Miller, "Golden Streets, Bitter Tears" (forthcoming in Dirk Hoerder



and Horst Roessler, eds., *Distant Magnets: Expectations and Realities in the Immigrant Experience*).

30. Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, Robert Korstad, and James Leloudis, "Cotton Mill People," pp. 249, 260, 267.

31. The following section is based on the manuscript autobiography of the Austrian social democrat Josef N. Jodlbauer, "13 Jahre in Amerika" [1910–1923], written in March 1948, 278 pages. I am grateful to Dr. Herbert Steiner, Vienna, for drawing my attention to the unpublished manuscript in his possession and for permission to use a photocopy for this essay. I am presently looking for a publisher for a translated, abridged, and annotated version of this important autobiography. Citations are given by manuscript page number in the text.

32. This paraphrases the German text.



## Envoi

### I

Like no other non-English-speaking group in nineteenth-century America, German immigrants played a central role in the creation of the American labor movement. As David Brody has reminded us, trade-union structure and policy may have been based on English models, but American labor philosophy was derived largely from German sources.<sup>1</sup> Yet for many obvious reasons the German-American role has been slighted—in part at least because, unlike the Irish who into the third and fourth generation accounted for a disproportionately high percentage of the officers of the American Federation of Labor (as did those of British origin, and subsequently those of Russian-Jewish origin), the German-American subculture did not produce an equivalent cadre of prominent union leaders to give symbolic recognition to the German role. Of the seventy-eight of the 150 late-nineteenth-century labor leader sample identified by ethnic origin by Warren Van Tine, only five were German; in the subsequent generation, of 120 identified by ethnic origin (of a sample of 200 business unionists), only seven were of German parentage and only one was a German immigrant.<sup>2</sup> Equally telling has been the commitment to Americanization and self-dissolution fostered by the German-American labor ideology, so that inquiries into the most emphatically expressive German-American labor institutions seemed, at least until recent years, gratuitous, even as a study of process.

On these grounds alone, a volume like this one takes on unusual import. For the first time, it makes vividly apparent the role of the German-American radical press during the last half of the nineteenth



and the first decades of the twentieth century and opens the way to an understanding of a sector of American life that has eluded historians heretofore.

Essential to a comprehension of the role of the German-American radical press is an appreciation of the extraordinary volume, variety, and complexity of the great German immigration and its historic timing. At three critical junctures in the course of nearly half a century, German immigration crested to the accompaniment, both in Germany and in the United States, of political turbulence and ideological ferment that demanded to be heard. In the first period, between 1847 and 1854, German immigration averaged over 100,000 annually, second only to the Irish of the great famine years; in the second, between 1865 and 1874, German immigration mounted to 110,000 annually, running ahead of all others; and in the third, between 1881 and 1892, the record total of 1,700,000 German immigrants, or about 140,000 annually, was without compare in the whole history of immigration before the twentieth century. After that the great German migration subsided with an abrupt finality. So much was this so that Walter Kamphoefner noted that in the early years of the twentieth century, of all immigrants, Germans were the least likely to travel abroad or to enter the United States more than once. The story of German-America clearly had reached a new stage, impelling a German savant to put forth the famous question—"Why is there no socialism in the United States?"—clearly pointed at German-America, which historians have continued to debate ever since. From the German laborer's diet of "potatoes and alcohol" up the rungs of the German-American workman's Algeresque ladder to "roast beef and apple pie" was not quite Werner Sombart's answer to the question he posed.<sup>3</sup> But whether the German historical sociologist knew it or not, by the early years of the twentieth century, German-American workmen in particular were abundantly represented among the charter members of the American Federation of Labor. In an ever more sharply stratified and bureaucratized multi-ethnic industrial America, German-American workmen had rounded a corner, had acquired a privileged American place, and had attained a new equilibrium.

In the preceding half-century, no other major ethnic group in America had encountered the full brunt of the forces of modernity—nationalism, liberalism, industrialism, and socialism—both in its country of origin and its country of adoption—with the swirling intensity of German-America. Massively settled in virtually all of America's great cities, German immigrants were more heavily and diversely colo-



nized in the skilled crafts than were members of any other ethnic group. Moreover, the succession of worldwide depressions which simultaneously struck the world's two leading industrializing countries with unmatched force and severity, coincided with the German migration to America. In Germany the rise and suppression of socialism and in the United States an unprecedented labor upheaval would give the German-American radical press a sense of historic immediacy not quite shared by others less directly implicated.

Already, in the mid-nineteenth century, when American workmen expanded their ranks to encompass an ever more varied multiethnic fellowship, German immigrants were the first to test American labor's capacity for fraternity. Infused with the French, the German, and the wider international revolutionary *élan* of the 1840s, as one historian has emphasized, German immigrants totally transformed the Anglo-American workmen's world, most notably of metropolitanizing New York, the nation's greatest industrial city.

By the Civil War years, in Chicago no less than in New York, as John Jentz has demonstrated, and in so many other cities as well, the formidable German presence contributed to the emergence of the first bona fide interethnic labor movement in the world. However episodic, then and for a generation thereafter, the German-American labor movement would occupy an integral place in labor's ranks. "Given the immigrant basis of so much of America's urban and industrial work force after 1850 and the influence of German-America on so many other foreign language speaking immigrants, this link was arguably the true tap-root of the American labor movement," contends Stanley Nadel. Samuel Gompers' tribute to New York of the 1860s and 1870s as "the cradle of the labor movement," his assertion that the labor-veteran-led German-American socialist organizations constituted the most "virile and resourceful" segment of the New York labor movement, and the influence of the originally bilingual American Federation of Labor further testify to the centrality of the German role in New York City. In Chicago, Bruce Nelson sees its flourishing labor movement at the turn of the century as the triumphal heir of labor's most shattering defeat. Within a decade, the Haymarket tragedy and Waldheim, inseparable from German-American labor, had catalyzed the fusion of two antagonistic "republicanisms," the one homegrown or Anglo-American, the other "imported, almost alien," heterogeneous and continental but dominantly German, enabling Chicago to challenge London for the honor of "trade union capital of the world."<sup>4</sup>



## II

It is these tumultuous decades in American labor history which found special cause and voice in the German-American radical press and which the contributors to this volume elucidate with freshness, authority, and originality. To highlight the nature of the topic, I shall comment mainly on the essays by Hartmut Keil, Ken Fones-Wolf and Elliott Shore, Ruth Seifert, and Paul Buhle. Since these four essays are representative of the larger contours of our theme, reflective of the volume's four-part design, and suggestive of the major strengths and minor weaknesses of this undertaking, I trust my remarks may have some significance.

No historian has studied the German-American labor movement in the United States so diligently and so imaginatively as has Hartmut Keil. Clearly, his profile of German-American radical editors is a product of his long-term commitment, his virtual immersion in the files of the German-American radical press, and his association with the monumental bibliographical project calendaring the whole immigrant labor press that long absorbed the energies and talents of Dirk Hoerder and his associate Christiane Harzig.<sup>5</sup>

Keil's study, as well as Hoerder's landmark work, make all too apparent the fact that there has been a major blind spot, not only in the scholarship on the German-American press, which heretofore focused almost exclusively on the pre-Civil War era and especially on the 48ers, but even in the latest biographical dictionaries of American labor, reform, and radicalism, where the German-American presence goes virtually unrecorded.<sup>6</sup>

Keil's profile of the editors of the German-American radical press in its golden age between 1850 and 1910 is therefore a pioneer effort that promises to recast our understanding not only of the German-American labor subculture but of American labor as a whole. The circumstances that led to the "juvenescence" of German-American journalism, as Keil puts it, synchronizing as it did with the greatest migration in all of German history, are spelled out with great sensitivity and discrimination. If pre-Civil War journalism was primarily personal, the later radical press, as Keil makes evident, depended on a wide labor network to sustain it. Keil is especially thorough in analyzing for the first time the wide range of personalities who comprised the corps of editors and journalists, exiles like their predecessors, of the German-American radical papers and providing us with detailed data identifying the provenance of some two hundred of them. Most importantly, Keil reminds us that the editors of the German-American



radical press were emissaries of a German social democratic tradition that sharply distinguished them from their German-American competitors. In addition to emulating German labor institutions, editors of the radical press in the United States kept abreast of developments on both continents, engaged in a perennial interchange of copy with their colleagues in Europe, and often not only visited back and forth but shifted from one editorial post to another on either side of the Atlantic.

Most important, radical editors, unlike their counterparts of the larger German immigrant press, were committed on principle to the Americanization of their readers that was inseparable from their socialist and cosmopolitanizing mission. They perforce, therefore, had not only to witness the decline of a prideful classic German literary culture to which they were pledged but to address an English-reading public as well, which led them to issue and distribute a great number of English-language publications. Since labor organization was given priority over cultural maintenance, Keil concludes, the ethnic and ideological marginality of the German-American radical press combined to divest it of its readership and its staying power to a far greater extent than was true of the other German-American newspapers.

Yet Keil has insisted elsewhere that despite the erosion of the German-language press and the ascendancy of the second generation, the "German working-class culture did not disappear without a trace into a homogeneous middle-class culture but contributed to an American working-class culture differing in significant ways from the norms and values of the hegemonic society."<sup>7</sup> But Keil leaves it at that and does not go beyond to analyze or portray the impact of a residual German-American labor subculture on the American labor scene in the opening decades of the twentieth century.

In response perhaps to John Higham's plea that labor and ethnic historians surmount their parochialisms, two scholars have collaborated to produce a case study of the interplay between class and ethnicity based on a fine-grained analysis of the German-American and general press of Philadelphia. In their essay Ken Fones-Wolf and Elliott Shore demonstrate how German-American workingmen responded to the dilemma created by the conflict between their economic self-interest and class fealties and their ethnic group loyalties.

In this intricate paper the authors chose to focus on three kinds of newspapers, those committed to ethnic solidarity at many different levels, those engaged in modifying immigrant culture to accommodate the individualistic drives of their readers in a dynamic economy, and those committed to working-class unity. Inevitably, Fones-Wolf and Shore's study becomes a study in irony, for they show how in



1872, in the absence of a pro-labor German newspaper, workingmen turned to the general press for support. By contrast, in 1886, the very existence of a radical pro-labor German newspaper proved politically self-defeating, for it only intensified persistent ideological and ethnic differences within the ranks of labor.

Fones-Wolf and Shore do not carry their study of the German press into the 1890s and beyond, nor do they portray the relations between German workmen and others, except obliquely. One wonders whether the survival rate for labor unions and workmen's societies twenty years and older in Philadelphia in 1900 was any greater than New York City's 19 percent, what proportion were German, and what sectors of the labor world continued to be ethnoculturally German.<sup>8</sup> To what extent did the German-American socialist heritage, upon merging with an Anglo-American ideology of republican constitutionalism and millennial Christianity, continue to inform the labor ethos? Along what lines did a changing economy and technology and the immigrants coming predominantly from southern and eastern Europe drastically alter labor's ethnic composition, create a new set of relationships, and contribute as well to the consolidation of an ethnically stratified labor force?<sup>9</sup> A portrayal of these changes as they were reflected in Philadelphia's German-American and general press in the first two decades of the twentieth century, as ingenious in its design as the one for the earlier decades, would enhance our understanding of the labor dynamics of an ethnocultural urban America and of the role of the press as interpreter, mediator, and partisan.

Ruth Seifert's careful study of the woman question, based primarily on an examination of the women's page of the *New Yorker Volkszeitung* between 1900 and 1914, although it holds few surprises, is an important one. Since German-American socialists, like their German counterparts, showed little spirit for diverting their energies away from the socialist struggle in which both men and women shared, the cause of women's emancipation remained peripheral. Except for a few fleeting voices, in these years the airing of women's problems, it would seem, was almost as uncongenial to the German socialist press, as it was to the larger German-American press and to the Social Democracy and the trade unions in Wilhelmine Germany.<sup>10</sup>

Seifert's paper would have been even more valuable had the woman question been placed in a larger American ethnocultural context. By doing so, Seifert might have viewed the woman question along with prohibition, immigration restriction, and other social issues that contributed to the apparent standoff between an older and a newer America in the opening decades of the twentieth century and that com-



promised the role of the socialists. Surely the conflict between socialist German-America and progressive Anglo-America would make even more intelligible the modest acknowledgment of women's problems by members of a patriarchal culture responding to a genuine sense of siege.<sup>11</sup>

Surprisingly, America's most important German socialist newspaper has yet to find its historian. Even recently published biographical encyclopedias of labor, of the left, and of reform make no place for *New Yorker Volkszeitung* editors Alexander Jonas, Adolf Douai, Sergius Sche-witsch, and Hermann Schlüter, while the *Biographical Dictionary of the Left* grants its last editor, Ludwig Lore, no more than a brief sketch. Thus far, all we have had, and most valuable indeed, thanks to the publication program of the Labor Newspaper Preservation Project in Bremen, are reprints of the tenth (1888), twenty-fifth (1903), and fiftieth (1928) anniversary issues of the *Volkszeitung*.

Paul Buhle's paper therefore is especially welcome. A close study of the *New Yorker Volkszeitung* in the aftermath of World War I and the Russian Revolution, when the whole nineteenth-century socialist tradition appeared to have entered upon a final parting of the ways, provides a rare opportunity for genuine stocktaking. Here for the first time, Buhle leads us to believe, we will learn about a newspaper which more than any other had "the prestige, intellectual leadership," and "sustained national impact" that placed it at the hub of German-American socialist culture and of the German-American labor movement. Most importantly, we are led to anticipate that for the critical thirteen-year period upon which Buhle has focused, he will elaborate in precise historical detail on the provocative assertions that he makes in his opening statement: "The *Volkszeitung*" to its last days, "truly ruled American Marxist organization. . . . It took a unique, essentially independent position anchored outside the Socialist and Communist movements proper, in the fraternal societies and the German-immigrant-based unions. Therein lay its strength and its longevity."

Regrettably Buhle has not gone much beyond the *Volkszeitung*'s fiftieth anniversary issue, and a few others, to inform his vision of the changing role of that newspaper. If the *Volkszeitung* was indeed the stellar journal that he insists that it was, then surely a careful, critical, and detailed appraisal of its contents from 1917 to 1930 would have shown beyond a doubt that the paper's "reputation for literary quality unsurpassed in the radical press" had genuine merit and that the *Volkszeitung* was indeed the culmination of fourscore years of German-American cultural idealism. A review of the editors' approach to cultural, political, labor, social, and international affairs and issues,



as well as reader response, would have demonstrated what it meant to be a German-American socialist in such portentous times as World War I, the German and Russian revolutions, the Red Scare, the era of Prohibition, and the age of Weimar, Hitler, and Stalin.<sup>12</sup> A precise and textured portrait of "the brilliant dusk of German-American socialism," if it indeed was that, as recorded in the *Volkszeitung*, would vindicate Buhle's claims, do justice to his best insights, and make a major contribution to our understanding of an important era and newspaper which he is singularly equipped to delineate.

### III

In sum, the distinctive virtues of the contributions to this volume are attributable to the intensity of their focus and their authors' scrupulous, almost compulsive, reliance upon the files of the German-American radical press. Their weakness, naturally, is the obverse of their strength—simply put, their exclusivity: their failure to relate the German-American radical press to the American, the other ethnic, and the nonradical German-American newspapers. Whatever the reason for this limitation, also left untold is the wider influence of the German-American radical press. Clearly, the press, labor movement, and related supportive German-American social and cultural institutions cut a wide swath, for it was they who served as models for other ethnic groups. Even Bruce Nelson, who gives considered attention to the non-German radical press, makes only passing note of the relationship between the Chicago German newspapers and their Czech, Polish, Lithuanian, Danish, Italian, and general American counterparts.

Three disparate examples perhaps may be suggestive of the extended impact of the German-American labor culture, both early and late, and lines of further research that might be pursued. The first illustrates its relationship to another ethnic group; the second relates to the role of the social democratic press in combating totalitarianism; and the third points to the little studied connections in the twentieth century between the generations.

Often remarked but little explored has been the role which the German-American labor movement played in nurturing its early Jewish analogue. The adoption of German terms such as *Gewerkschaften* for trade unions, *Genossen* for party members, and *Sektionen* for party branches, no less than the Yiddish equivalents of the German in the titles of newspapers and in everyday nomenclature, was inevitable. The patterning of the United Hebrew Trades on the model of the United German Trades and the Workmen's Circle on the *Arbeiter Kranken*



and Sterbe Kasse was no less so. The aid extended to the founders of the first Yiddish socialist weekly, no less than the appropriation of the whole universalistic German socialist frame of discourse, was taken as a matter of course.<sup>13</sup> The dynamics of that German-Jewish relationship, however, have yet to be explored.

At an entirely different level is the need to relate the German-American socialist press to Hitlerian Germany, to the American labor movement, and to the German Resistance. In 1932, upon the demise of the last German-American social democratic daily, the *New Yorker Volkszeitung* was succeeded by the *Neue Volkszeitung*, which became German-America's leading anti-Nazi weekly. Staffed primarily by political refugees, it has yet to be afforded its proper place within the German-American socialist tradition.<sup>14</sup>

Finally, German-American labor's finest hour has gone unnoticed. Surely a singular contribution to the enhancement of labor's role in mid-twentieth-century America has been attributed to the remarkable Reuther brothers—Roy, Victor, and most notably, Walter—whose vision of the labor movement was conditioned by the total commitment of their German immigrant father to the socialist dream of social justice. "Reuther's idealism and inventiveness were products of the American working-class experience, a creative adaptation of social democratic perspectives to American conditions and realities, manifested not only in words, but also in the daily lives of millions," one of Walter Reuther's biographers has written. A second has gone so far as to call Reuther "the most exciting and influential trade unionist" of his time "because he defined the outer limits of liberalism's social and economic agenda."<sup>15</sup> Yet it is the invisible role of Reuther's father's generation, Valentine's generation, that needs the attention of historians if the fuller implications for American life of the continuing legacy of the German-American socialist experience is to be understood.

Thus far, not surprisingly, the initiative for the advancement of our knowledge of German-American labor including the history of the German-American radical press has in great part come not from American but from German historians, initially interested primarily in their own history, especially the history of German immigration. The result in the 1980s has been the publication of an extraordinary corpus of historical works that for the first time illuminate the German, no less than the German-American, labor experience.<sup>16</sup>

It is to be hoped that American historians will now redress the balance, further extending and broadening our understanding by asking questions that will go beyond the scholarship generated thus far. The effective utilization of the German-American radical press, no less than



the newspapers of other ethnic groups and the general press, as well as diverse sources not readily accessible to German historians, ought to carry the story a step further. By making the multiethnic, interethnic, and cross-cultural parameters of the German-American labor experience intelligible as they have not been heretofore, American historians are in a position to extend the boundaries of our knowledge in serendipitous ways that will further cosmopolitanize our understanding of the emergent American and modern world, no less than the history of American labor.

## NOTES

1. David Brody, "Labor," pp. 611–12.
2. See David Montgomery, "Irish and the American Labor Movement," pp. 205–6; Pitrim Sorokin, "Leaders of Labor," p. 390; Moses Rischin, "Jewish Labor Movement in America," p. 241; Robert L. Mikkelsen, "Immigrants in Politics," pp. 292–93; Warren R. Van Tine, *Making of the Labor Bureaucrat*, pp. 9, 19–20, 29, 185–86.
3. See Patricia M. Hocking and G. T. Husbands, eds., *Why Is There No Socialism in the United States?* pp. 105–6, 121; Peter R. Shergold, *Working-Class Life*, pp. 8–9, 224–30.
4. Stanley Nadel, "From the Barricades of Paris," pp. 47–50, 54–55, 74–75; Bruce C. Nelson, *Beyond the Martyrs*, pp. 238–39, 242.
5. *Immigrant Labor Press in North America*.
6. *Biographical Dictionary of American Labor Leaders; American Reformers; and Biographical Dictionary of the Left*.
7. Hartmut Keil, "German Immigrant Workers in Nineteenth-Century America," 1:203; Keil, "German Working-Class Radicalism," pp. 86–90; also see *German Workers' Culture in the United States*.
8. John Higham, "Current Trends in the Study of Ethnicity." See Moses Rischin, *Promised City*, pp. 172–73; Ellen Skerrett, "Development of Catholic Identity," pp. 128–29.
9. See e.g. Shergold, *Working-Class Life*, pp. 54–55; Rischin, *Promised City*, pp. 184–85.
10. Werner Thonnessen, *Emancipation of Women*, pp. 70–71; Richard Evans, *Feminist Movement in Germany*, pp. 3ff., 175ff., 265ff.; Jean H. Quataert, *Reluctant Feminists*, pp. 93–94, 228ff.
11. Frederick C. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty*, pp. 68, 99; James H. Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement*, pp. 96–99; Alan P. Grimes, *Puritan Ethic and Woman Suffrage*, pp. 130–33.
12. See Carl E. Schorske, *German Social Democracy*, pp. 285–330; Richard Breitman, *German Socialism and Weimar Democracy*; and Lewis J. Edinger, *German Exile Politics*.
13. Rischin, *Promised City*, pp. 150–51, 176–77; also see Stanley Nadel, "Jewish Race and the German Soul," pp. 19–22.



14. "Foreign Language Press in New York," typescript, on deposit in the Columbia School of Journalism Library, 1941, p. 411; Robert E. Cazden, *German Exile Literature in America*, pp. 29-38; and Franz Osterroth, *Biographisches Lexikon des Sozialismus*.

15. John Barnard, *Walter Reuther*, pp. 1-17, 117, 214; Nelson Lichtenstein, "Walter Reuther and the Rise of Labor-Liberalism," p. 310; see also Irving Howe and B. J. Widick, *UAW and Walter Reuther*, pp. 187-92 and Irving Bernstein, *Turbulent Years*, pp. 502, 556-59.

16. Irmgard Steinisch, "Studies of American Labor History in West Germany," pp. 531-32.



## Appendix: List of Editors/Journalists of German-American Radical Papers, 1865–1914<sup>1</sup>

- Appel, George W. *Hammer*, Philadelphia (1886–?)
- Bachmann, Charles G. *Deutsch-Amerikanische Buchdruckerzeitung*, Philadelphia (1873–76)
- Backhofen, Charles *Arbeiterzeitung*, Erie (1892)
- Backstein, G. *California Arbeiterzeitung* (1887–93)
- \*Baginski, Max *Vorbote* (1894–?), *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1894–1907?), *Sturmglöcke* (1896), *Freiheit* (1907–10), *Internationale Arbeiter-Chronik* (1914)
- Baginski, Richard *Buffaloer Arbeiterzeitung* (1897)
- Ballin, Hans *Amerikanische Turnzeitung*, Milwaukee (1910)
- \*Bartel, Heinrich [1874–after 1954] *Neuengland Staaten Volkszeitung*, Lawrence, Mass. (1906), *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1906–11), *Sheboygan Volksblatt* (1909–16), *Milwaukee Vorwärts* (1911–32), *Das freie Wort*, Milwaukee (1933–54)
- Bechtold, Heinrich C. *Michigan Arbeiterzeitung* (1888–92?), *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung*, *Fackel*, Chicago (1889–95)
- Berandun, J. *Freidenker*, Milwaukee (1908–13)
- \*Berger, Victor Louis [1860–1929] *Wisconsin Vorwärts* (1894–98?)
- \*Biedenkapp, Georg [1843–1924] *Der Tramp*, New York (1888; 1901–2?)
- Biron, Michael [1832–?] *Freidenker* (1872–74), *Milwaukee'r Sozialist* (1877), *Vorwärts* (1878), *Arbeiterzeitung* (1879–80), *Milwaukee*

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\* = more detailed information available

# = left Germany 1878–90

Place of publication may vary according to date of publication.



- Journal* (1880–81), *Arminia*, Milwaukee (1882?–1906), *Lucifer*, Milwaukee (1882?–1906) *Milwaukee Volkszeitung* (?–1892)
- Blatz, Valentin *Milwaukee'r Arbeiterzeitung* (1889), *Wahrheit*, Milwaukee? (1889–1910)
- Block, George A. NYVZ (1881–?), *Deutsch-Amerikanische Bäcker-Zeitung* (1885–89)
- Blumhardt, Charles *Buffalo Tribune* (1876)
- Boehm, Ernst *Brauerzeitung*, Cincinnati (1888)
- \*Boppe, Carl Hermann [1842–99] *Newarker Post* (1874–75), *Freidenker*, Milwaukee (1877–99), *Deutsch-Amerikanische Turnzeitung* (1885–99)
- Brandt, H. *California Freie Presse* (1879–80)
- Braun, Charles *Hammer*, Philadelphia (1882–89)
- Briesen, Julius v. NYVZ
- Brucker, Joseph [1849–1921] *Milwaukee'r Sozialist* (1875–78), *Chicagoer Sozialist* (1876–79), *Volkszeitung*, Chicago (1877), *Freidenker*, Milwaukee (after 1895)
- Brunnemann, Carl *Volksstimme des Westens*, *Sonntagsblatt*, St. Louis (1877–80)
- Bunge, Martin L. D. *Amerikanische Turnzeitung*, Milwaukee (1913–17)
- \*Carl, Conrad (*Neue*) *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, New York (1873–75)
- \*#Christensen, Jens L. [1856–?] *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung*, *Vorbote*, *Fackel* (1888–89)
- \*Conzett, Conrad [1848–97] *Vorbote* (1874–78), *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1876–80)
- Cuno, Theodor [1847–1934] NYVZ (1880?–)
- Currlin, Albert *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1889?), *Arbeiterstimme*, Chicago (1889), *California Arbeiterzeitung* (1890?–91), *Volkszeitung der Pacific-Küste*, San Francisco (1891–94)
- Damm, Peter *Carriage and Wagon Workers Journal*, Chicago (1899–1904)
- Darkow, Martin *Philadelphia Tageblatt*
- Daut, Carl *Arbeiterzeitung*, Philadelphia (1869?–)
- Degen, Robert NYVZ (1878–?), *Deutsch-Amerikanische Bäckerzeitung* (1889)
- Detmers, F. *Cincinnati Zeitung* (1888–89)
- Deuss, Edmund *Volksblatt Sheboygan* (1905), *Wisconsin Vorwärts* (?–1911)
- \*Dietzgen, Joseph [1828–88] *Sozialist* (1885), *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung*, *Vorbote* (1886–88)
- \*Douai, Adolf [1819–88] *Arbeiter-Union* (1868–70), NYVZ (1878–88)
- Dreifuss, Adolf *Neues Leben* (1907–10), *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (?–1919), *Vorbote* (?–1924)



- \*Drescher, Martin [1863–1920] *Herold*, Detroit (1897–98), *Der arme Teufel* (1898–1900), *Wolfsaugen*, St. Louis (1900–1901), *Mephisto* (1901–?), *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1901–7?), *Zigeuner* (1902), *Milwaukee Vorwärts*
- Drexler, Adolph *Buffaloer Arbeiterzeitung* (1892–93)
- Dreyer, Theodor *Herold*, Detroit (?–1918)
- Ebel, Ernst *Neues Leben*, Chicago (1902?–10?), *Tageblatt*, San Francisco (1902?–6?)
- Eckhart, Emil C. *Laterne*, Buffalo (1880)
- Emrich, Henry *Möbel-Arbeiter Journal*, New York (1883–?)
- Ende, Heinrich *Ohio Volkszeitung*, Cincinnati (1876–78?), *Emancipator?* (1877), *Arbeiter am Ohio* (1877–79), *Pionier*
- Ferle, Max *Deutsch-Amerikanische Fleischerzeitung*, Brooklyn (1904)
- Fernitz, Gustav *Neue Zeit*, Louisville (1877–78)
- \*Fischer, Adolf [1863–87] *Anarchist*, Chicago (1886)
- Fleck, Willibald *Amerikanische Turnzeitung*, Milwaukee (1910–13)
- Forker, Max *Buffaloer Arbeiterzeitung* (1889–1900)
- \*Franz, Jacob L. [1846–1902] *Philadelphia Tageblatt* (1878–82), *NYVZ* (1882–96), *Brauerzeitung* (1886–1900)
- \*#Fritzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm [1825–1905] *Philadelphia Tageblatt*, *Hammer* (1882–?)
- Fuchs, Jacob *Herold*, Detroit (1897)
- Geissler, Ludwig A. *Hammer*, New Orleans (1876)
- Gragorovius, Rudolph *NYVZ* (1901–?)
- Grossmann, Maximilian [1854–?] *Freidenker*, Milwaukee (1883–84)
- Grossmann, Rudolf *Zeitgeist*, New York (1901), *Fackel* (1902–?)
- \*Grottkau, Paul [1846–98] *Vorbote*, *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1878–80; 1881–84; 1888), *Milwaukee'r Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1886–88), *California Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1891?–?)
- Grunzig, Julius [1855–?] *NYVZ* (1890–91)
- Haecker, Friedrich *Philadelphia Tageblatt*
- Haefelin *Arbeiterfreund*, McKeesport, Penn. (1884–85)
- Haller, Frederic *Progress*, New York
- Hartung, Urban *Herold*, Detroit (1911–?)
- Hass, Peter *Arbeiterzeitung*, Philadelphia (1869?–?)
- \*#Hasselman, Wilhelm [1844–?] *Amerikanische Arbeiterzeitung*, New York (1886)
- Hecht, Julius *Buffaloer Arbeiterzeitung* (1892–?)
- Heins-Heuryot, A. *Volksanwalt Cincinnati* (1897)
- \*Heinzen, Karl [1809–80] *Pionier* (?–1879), *Freidenker* (1880)
- \*#Hepner, Adolf [1846–1923] *NYVZ* (1883–84?), *Philadelphia Tageblatt*, *St. Louis Tageblatt* (1888–97)



- Herbrand, Louis *Brauerzeitung* (1886–88)
- Hickler, Simon *Milwaukee'r Arbeiterzeitung* (1888), *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1889–90), *Vorbote* (1889–94), *Milwaukee Volkszeitung* (1890?)
- Hirschberger, Anton *Volksblatt Sheboygan* (1901–?)
- Hoehn, G. A. *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1890–94), *Tageblatt-Abendpost*, St. Louis (1897–98), *Arbeiterzeitung St. Louis* (1898–1910–1931?)
- Hoffmann, Charles *Buffaloer Arbeiterzeitung* (1887–88, 1891)
- Hohmann, Charles F. *Deutsch-Amerikanische Bäckerzeitung*, Chicago (1908–?)
- Holler, Joseph NYVZ (1878–?)
- Huhn, Heinrich *Freidenker* (1899–1908), *Amerikanische Turnzeitung*, Milwaukee (1901?–8?)
- Hunger, Jakob *Milwaukee'r Arbeiterzeitung* (1889), *Volkszeitung Milwaukee* (1890–92), *Wisconsin Vorwärts* (?–1911)
- \*#Ibsen, Karl *Deutsch-Amerikanische Bäckerzeitung*, Chicago (1889–91), *Clevelanders Volksfreund* (1893–?)
- Isaak, A. *Das freie Wort*, New York (1907)
- Jahn, M. P. *Arbeiterzeitung Erie* (1893–95)
- \*Jonas, Alexander [1834–1912] *Arbeiterstimme* (1877–78), NYVZ (1878–1912)
- Joos *Arbeiterfreund*, McKeesport, Penn. (1884–85)
- Kahler, H. *Philadelphia Tageblatt*
- Kaufmann, Adolf *Herold*, Detroit (?–1898)
- \*#Keitel, August [1844–93] *Clevelanders Volksfreund* (1886–92)
- \*Kleist, Carl *Wisconsin Vorwärts* (?–1911)
- \*Klings, Carl [1846–?] *Der Deutsche Arbeiter* (1869–70), *Vorbote*, Chicago (1874)
- Koberlein, Anton *Zukunft*, Philadelphia (1884–85)
- Koberstein, Paul *Buffalo Tribune* (1876–78), *Arbeiterstimme am Erie* (1878), *Philadelphia Tageblatt*
- Koch, Hans *Der Strom*, New York (1910), *Anti-Autoritär*, New York (1911)
- Koppel, Richard *Clevelanders Volksfreund* (1908?–18)
- Kraemer, L. T. *Freiheit*, New York
- Kurzenknabe, Ernst *Brauerzeitung* (1888–96)
- Lange, E. *Parole*, St. Louis (1884–85)
- \*Landsberg, Dr. Wilhelm *Arbeiter-Union*, New York (1868)
- Lehmann, August *Biene*, Holyoke, Mass. (1894–1918)
- Liebig, Dr. Edward *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung*, *Vorbote* (1880–81)
- Liess, Emil *San Francisco Tageblatt* (1894–99), *Vorwärts der Pacific Küste* (1911)



- Loebel, Oscar *Volksblatt Sheboygan* (1895–1901?)  
 Lore, Lily NYVZ  
 \*Lore, Ludwig [1875–1942] NYVZ  
 \*#Lossau, Paul *Philadelphia Tageblatt*, NYVZ (1881–?)  
 Ludwig, Otto *Volksstimme des Westens*, St. Louis (1877–80)  
 \*Lyser, Gustav [1841–1909] *Sozial-Demokrat* (1874–75), *Milwaukee'r Sozialist* (1875), *Leuchtkugeln*, Milwaukee (1876), *Die rothe Laterne*, Milwaukee (1876), *Fackel*, Chicago (1879–80), *Bahnbrecher der Zukunft*, Chicago (1886)  
 Mauer, Nic. *Anarchist*, New York (1891–?)  
 Mayer, A. *Parole*, St. Louis (1885)  
 Meier, Ernst A. *Cincinnati Zeitung* (1886–?)  
 \*#Milke, Friedrich [1845–?] *Deutsch-Amerikanische Buchdrucker-Zeitung* (1883–86)  
 Miller, Hugo *Gewerkschaftszeitung* (1879–80), *Deutsch-Amerikanische Buchdrucker-Zeitung*, New York and Indianapolis (1886–1926)  
 \*#Most, Johann [1846–1906] *Freiheit*, New York (1879–1906), *Buffaloer Arbeiterzeitung* (1897–98)  
 Mostlar, August *Brauerzeitung* (1906–17)  
 Mostler, Joseph *Buffaloer Arbeiterzeitung* (1897, 1898–99), *Buffalo Herold* (1897–98), *Neuengland Staaten Volkszeitung*, Lawrence, Mass. (?–1906)  
 Mueller, Gus *Volksanwalt Cincinnati* (1891?–94)  
 Mueller, Jakob *Hammer*, New Orleans (1876)  
 Mueller, Otto *California Freie Presse* (1879–80)  
 Neuhauser, Carl *Arbeiter-Freund*, Wheeling (1865–76)  
 Newald, E. *Herold*, Detroit (1893?–97)  
 \*Otto-Walster, August [1834–98] *Sozial-Demokrat*, *Arbeiterstimme*, New York (1876–77), *Volksstimme des Westens*, St. Louis (1877–80)  
 Price, George M. *Buffaloer Arbeiterzeitung* (1887)  
 Rahnmlow, G. *Anti-Autoritär*, New York (1911)  
 Rahn, Gustav A. *Volkszeitung Milwaukee* (1890)  
 Rappaport, Philip  
 Reifgraber, Joseph J. *Parole*, St. Louis (1884, 1886)  
 \*#Reimer, Otto [1841–?] NYVZ  
 \*Reitzel, Robert [1849–1898] *Der arme Teufel*, Detroit (1884–98)  
 Rinke, Otto *Kämpfer*, St. Louis (1896)  
 Roepke, O. *Gewerkschaftszeitung*, New York (1880–81)  
 Romm, Julie NYVZ (?–1919)  
 \*#Rosenberg, Wilhelm Ludwig [1850–193?] *Fackel*, Chicago (1880–84), *Sozialist*, New York (1885–89), *Vorwärts* (1892–?), *Cincinnati Tageblatt* (1895–96), *Echo*, Cleveland (1911)



- Ruhbaum, Rudolph *Arbeiterfreund*, Chicago (1874)  
Saltiel, Robert *Neues Leben*, Chicago (1905–7)  
Savary, Carl *Vorwärts*, Newark (1877–79)  
Schaefer, John NYVZ (1878–?)  
Schaepli, Gustav A. *Amerikanische Turnzeitung*, Milwaukee (1908)  
\*Schewitsch, Sergius [1848–?] NYVZ (1878–90)  
\*#Schiele, Friedrich [1848–?] *Cincinnatiatier Zeitung* (1886–?)  
\*Schilling, Robert [1843–1922] *Coopers Journal* (1870–75), *Reformer*, Milwaukee (1880–?), *Milwaukee Volksblatt* (1882–90?)  
\*#Schlüter, Hermann [1851–1919] NYVZ (1890–1919)  
Schmidt, Joseph *Deutsch-Amerikanische Bäckerzeitung*, Chicago (1903–8)  
Schmidt, Karl *Freiheit*, New York  
Schneider, Charles *Carriage and Wagon Workers Journal*, Chicago (1904–6)  
Schnepppe, Carl NYVZ  
Schudel, John *Deutsch-Amerikanische Bäckerzeitung*, Chicago (1897–1903)  
Schulze, Moritz *Freiheit*, *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1887–88, 1890–94)  
Schultze, W. M. *Hammer*, Philadelphia (1886)  
\*Schumm, Georg *Pionier* (1874), *Libertas*, Boston (1888)  
Schwab, Justus H. *Freiheit*, New York (1882)  
\*Schwab, Michael [1853–98] *Vorbote*, *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1884–86)  
Sigel, Hermann [1840–94] *Milwaukee'r Sozialist* (1878), *Vorwärts* (1878–79)  
Silz, Max *Volksanwalt Cincinnati* (1894–98?)  
Soubron, Otto [1846–?] *Amerikanische Turnzeitung*, Milwaukee (1909)  
Sozing, W. *California Freie Presse* (1881–?)  
\*Speyer, Carl *Gewerkschaftszeitung*, New York (1879–81), *Carpenter*, Indianapolis (1904?–?)  
Speyer, George J. *Gewerkschaftszeitung*, New York (1880–81)  
\*Spies, August [1855–87] *Vorbote*, *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1884–86)  
\*Starke, Rudolf *Arbeiter-Union*, New York (1869–70), (*Neue*) *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, New York (1873–75)  
Steichmann, H. *Herold*, Detroit (1898–1905)  
Steiner, Robert *Arbeiterzeitung Belleville* (1884), *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1890–94), *Arbeiterzeitung St. Louis* (1899), *Buffaloer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (1916)  
\*#Stoehr, Max [1849–?] *Tageblatt St. Louis* (1888?–97?), *St. Louis Tageblatt-Abendpost* (1897–98)



- \*Strasser, Adolf *Cigar Makers Official Journal* (1877-?), *Gewerkschaftszeitung*, New York (1879-80)
- Tagwerker, Joseph *Nebraska Arbeiterzeitung* (1899)
- Tiecke, Louis *Hammer*, Philadelphia (?-1886)
- Timmermann, Claus *Parole*, St. Louis (1885-86), *Anarchist*, St. Louis (1889-95), *Brandfackel*, New York (1893-95), *Sturmvogel*, New York (1897-99)
- Trautmann, William *Brauerzeitung* (1900-1905)
- \*#Vahlteich, Julius [1839-1915] *Chicagoer Freie Presse* (1883), *Illinois Volkszeitung* (1884-85), *Tageblatt St. Louis* (1891), *NYVZ* (1901-8), *Chicagoer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (after 1910)
- Vogt, Hugo *Vorwärts*, New York (1878-?)
- Vossberg, A. *Arbeiterstimme*, New York (1875-76)
- Walter, Ernst *Buffaloer Arbeiterzeitung* (1888-?)
- Weber, Maurice *Sattler und Wagenbauer*, Chicago (1891?-1904?)
- Wegener, Ernst *Solidarität*, New York (1906-16)
- Weier, Ernest A. *Cincinnati Zeitung* (1886-87)
- Weigel, John P. *Brauerzeitung* (1905-6)
- Weil, Jean *Deutsch-Amerikanische Buchdrucker-Zeitung*, New York (1876-83)
- Weisman, Henry *Deutsch-Amerikanische Bäcker-Zeitung*, New York (1891-97)
- \*Weiss, Samuel [1861-97] *Buffaloer Arbeiter-Zeitung* (?-1891), *Arbeiterzeitung Erie* (1891), *The People*
- Wendt, F. W. *Parole*, St. Louis (1885)
- \*#Werner, Ludwig *Philadelphia Tageblatt* (1879-1926)
- Willig, Jakob *Volksanwalt Cincinnati* (1889-91), *Cincinnati Zeitung* (1890-95)
- Winnen, Jakob *Vorbote*, Chicago (1874)
- Winter, Georg *Arbeiterstimme* (1877), *NYVZ*
- Wytzka, J. *Metallarbeiter*, New York (1888)

## NOTE

1. Based on Karl J. R. Arndt and May E. Olson, *German-American Newspapers and Periodicals*, and Dirk Hoerder and Christiane Harzig, eds., *The German-American Radical Press* (forthcoming).